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# THE POETICAL WORKS OF

# JAMES THOMSON

## VOLUME I

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# THE ALDINE EDITION OF THE BRITISH POETS

THE POEMS OF JAMES THOMSON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL I

H Robinson, sc

James Thomson.

# ADVERTISEMENT.

THE text of this reprint of the Aldine Edition of THOMSON will be found I believe—I have had nothing to do with it—by far the most trustworthy of any text that has appeared since the Poet's death, in 1748.

The Memoir by Sir Harris Nicolas was first published in 1831, and revised and enlarged by Sir Harris himself, in 1847. What Sir Harris could not do for himself in this reprint I have endeavoured to do for him. The notes for which I hold myself responsible are distinguished by brackets.

In the Appendix will be found eight important letters from Thomson to Mallet recently brought to light, and consequently unknown to Sir Harris Nicolas.

PETER CUNNINGHAM.

Kensington,
*July*, 1860.

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# MEMOIR OF THOMSON.

BY SIR HARRIS NICOLAS.

JAMES THOMSON was the eldest son of the Reverend Thomas Thomson, of Ednam, in the shire of Roxburgh, at which place the Poet was born on the 11th of September, 1700. His father was well descended; and his mother was Beatrix, the daughter and coheiress of Mr. Trotter, of Fogo,* a genteel family in the neighbourhood of Greenlaw in Berwickshire. Mr. Thomson was licensed to preach on the 17th of June, 1691, was ordained minister of Ednam on the 12th of July, 1692, married in 1699, and was removed to Sudden, or Southdean, near Jedburgh, about 1701, the year after the Poet's birth.

* "1693, Oct. 6. The said day Mr. Thomas Thomson, minister of Ednam, and Beatrix Trotter, in the parish of Kelso, gave up their names for proclamation in order to marriage." Some notices of Mr. Thomas Thomson occur in "Kirkwood's plea before the Kirk." 4to. London, 1698. Mrs. Thomson's sister married first Mr. Hume, and secondly the Rev. Mr. Nicolson, minister of Preston and Buncle.

At an early period his dawning talents attracted the attention of Mr. Robert Riccaltoun, minister of the neighbouring parish of Hobkirk, a man of some literary genius, and a judicious friend of his father, who consented that he should superintend his son's education. He was placed at school in Jedburgh,* and the care this gentleman bestowed upon him was well rewarded by the success that attended his exertions.

Nor was Mr. Riccaltoun his only friend. Sir William Bennet, of Chesters, near Jedburgh, who was distinguished for his wit, honoured him with his kindness, and invited him to spend his summer vacations at his seat. Under the auspices of these generous friends, and of Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto,† Thomson wrote various pieces; but on the first of every January he destroyed most of his labours in the preceding year, and celebrated the annual con-

* The school was then kept in the aisle of Jedburgh Church. Dr. Somerville, formerly Minister of Jedburgh, says in a letter dated the 24th of April, 1795, "Of Thomson's having attended the school here, there is no doubt, for when I came here twenty years ago several survived who had been his companions, and some of them his class-fellows. When I made application for a new school-house to the heritors, in 1778, on account of the ruinous state of the old one, I was told by the person who was then the Provost, that he thought that the aisle of the Church might again be employed for that purpose; that greater men than any of the present generation had been educated there, for it was the place of the school when Mr. Thomson and himself attended it. The time of Thomson's attending school here was, I conjecture, from the year 1712 downwards."—*MS. in possession of* [*Mr. Pickering*] *the Publisher.*

† The Poet's uncle, and his cousin Robert Thomson, were gardeners at Minto.

flagration by some humorous verses, stating his reasons for their condemnation. A poetical epistle, addressed to Sir William Bennet, and written in his fourteenth year, and a characteristic little poem addressed to his favourite sister on her parting with her cat, have however been lately discovered, and will be found in this edition of his poems.

From Jedburgh young Thomson was, in March, 1715, sent to the University of Edinburgh, being intended for the Church; but, before he had been three years there, he lost his father, who died so suddenly that he did not see him before his decease. His widowed mother, who was left with nine children slenderly provided for, was advised to remove to Edinburgh, where she remained, living in an economical manner, until her son James had completed his studies.

It appears that Thomson had a great horror of supernatural powers, and that his fear of ghosts and goblins afforded much amusement to his fellow collegians. His bedfellow knowing that he was afraid to remain alone in the dark, quietly left him one night while he was asleep. On waking he rushed out of the room roaring like a frightened child, and calling loudly upon his landlady for assistance. Dr. Somerville, who relates this anecdote upon the authority of Mr. Cranston, late minister of Ancrum, who lodged in the same room with the Poet at Edinburgh, attributes his weakness on this subject to the following circumstance. "The belief in ghosts, witches, fairies, &c. was so exceedingly prevalent at the beginning of this century, that it would have been deemed heretical in any clergy-

man to have called in question their existence, or even their palpable interposition. One of the last appearances of these tremendous agents happened, (I am speaking in the language of the vulgar,) at Woolie, in the parish of Southdean, where Mr. Thomson was minister. Even since I entered into life, it was necessary to speak guardedly upon the subject of the Woolie Ghost, and I myself have more than once given offence by my silence upon the subject. The sequel of the story I have heard, not at second hand, but from the lips of a person, and that of rank and education above the vulgar. Mr. Thomson, the father of the Poet, in a fatal hour was prevailed upon to attempt laying the evil spirit. He appointed his diet of catechising at Woolie, the scene of the ghost's exploits, and beheld, when he had just begun to pray, a ball of fire strike him upon the head. Overwhelmed with consternation, he could not utter another word, or make a second attempt to pray. He was carried home to his house, where he languished under the oppression of diabolical malignity, and at length expired. Only think what an impression this story, I do not say fact, I say this story, for of it there can be no doubt, must necessarily have made upon the vigorous imagination of our young Poet."

In 1719 Thomson became a student of divinity, and performed exercises in February, 1720, February, 1722, and May, 1724, which is the last time his name is mentioned in the books; and those records also prove that he did not take a Master of Arts' degree, nor obtain any bursary. Among his contemporaries at the University, where their friend-

ship commenced, were David Malloch, or Mallet, who contributed several pieces to the "Edinburgh Miscellany," and Patrick Murdoch, his subsequent biographer; but his earliest, and one of the warmest of his friends, was Dr. Cranston, to whom the following, which is the first of Thomson's letters that has been found, was addressed:—

"Edinburgh, Dec. 11, 1720.

"Sir,

"I RECEIVED yours, wherein you acquaint me that mine was very acceptable to you. I am heartily glad of it; and to wave all ceremony, if any thing I can scribble be entertaining to you, may I be damned to transcribe dull books for the press all my life if I do not write abundantly. I fondly embrace the proposal you make of a frequent correspondence this winter, and that from the very same principle you mention; and when the native bright ideas which flow from your good humour have the ascendant over those gloomy ones that attend your profession, I expect you will not be a wanting.

"You will allege that I have the advantage over you, being in town, where daily happen a variety of incidents. In the first place you must know, though I live in Edinburgh, yet I am but little conversant in the beau monde, viz. concerts, balls, assemblies, &c. where beauty shines and coxcombs admire themselves. If nature had thrown me in a more soft and indolent mould, had made me a Shapely or a Sir Fopling Flutter, if fortune had filled my pockets, (I suppose my head is empty enough as it is,) had I been taught to cut a caper, to hum a tune, to take a pinch, and lisp nonsense with all the grace of fashionable insipidity, then I could—what could I have done? hardly write; but, however, I might have made a shift to fill up a

half sheet with 'rat me,' 'damn me,' &c. interspersed with broken characters of ladies gliding over my fancy like a passing image over a mirror. But if both nature and fortune had been indulgent to me, and made me a rich, finished gentleman, yet would I have reckoned it a piece of my greatest happiness to be acquainted with you, and you should have had entertainment if it was within the circle of wit and beauty to afford it; but alas! as it is, what can you expect from the Divinity hall or a Tippeny cell? It must be owned, indeed, that here in Edinburgh, to us humble sons of Tippeny, if beauty were as propitious as wit sometimes, we would have no reason to complain of the superior fortune of the fluttering generation; and O! ye foolish women, who have thus bewitched you? is it not wit that immortalizes beauty, that heightens it, and preserves it in a fresh eternal bloom? And did ever a fop either justly praise or admire you? but perhaps what I am railing at is well ordered, and if there was such a familiar intercourse betwixt wit and beauty as I would have, wit would degenerate into softness and luxury, and lose all its edge and keenness! it would dissolve in sighs or burst in nonsense. Wit and beauty thus joined would be, as Shakespeare has it, making honey a sauce to sugar; and yet another would say that beauty, divine beauty! enlivens, heightens, and refines wit; that even wit is the necessary result of beauty, which puts the spirits in that harmonious motion that produces it, that tunes them to that ecstasy, and makes them dart through the nerves, and sparkle in the eyes?—but whither am I rambling? What I am going to propose is, and you see there is great need for it, that you would in your next settle our correspondence into some order, and acquaint me on what subject you would have me

write to you, for on news of any kind I shall soon run aground.

"You write to me that Mass John* and his quadruped are making a large eccentrical orbit, together with two or three wallets full of books, which I suppose will be multiplied into several more of papers before they return; belike they may have taken a trip into China, and then we shall have his travels. There is one thing I hear storied, God forbid it be true! that his horse is metamorphosing into an ass; and by the last accounts I had of it, its lugs are shot up into a strange length, and the cross was just beginning to dawn upon its shoulders; and, besides, as it one day was saluting a capful of oats, wonderful to tell! it fell a-braying. I wish Nanny Noble were so comfortably settled as you hint. Tell Mass John, when you see him, that I have a bundle of worthies for him, if once I had received his packet.

"There are some come from London here lately, that teach natural philosophy by way of shows by the beat of drum, but more of that afterwards. I designed to have sent you a manuscript poem, but I have no time till next week.

"Yours heartily,

"JAMES THOMSON."

While at the University, Thomson contributed three articles to a volume entitled "The Edinburgh Miscellany," printed in that city in 1720, by a club called the Athenian Society. One of them, "On

* Thomson alludes in many of his letters to some friend by this appellation, and the Earl of Buchan observes, that it was "undoubtedly the Rev. Mr. J. Wilson, Minister of the Parish of Maxton in Roxburghshire, a particular friend of Dr. Cranston of Ancrum, and of Thomson."

a Country Life, by a Student of the University," and signed with the initial of his name, shows how early the love of rural scenery and pursuits took possession of his mind, and may be deemed the first conceptions of "The Seasons." His productions were rather severely treated by some learned persons into whose hands they fell; and one of his biographers has laboured to prove the want of taste of his judges. This charge is probably unjust, for early pieces afford slight indication of future powers.

It is said that Mr. Hamilton, the Divinity Professor of Edinburgh, having given Thomson a Psalm as an exercise, he made so poetical a paraphrase of it, that the professor and the audience were equally surprised; that after complimenting the writer, Mr. Hamilton told him that if he expected to be useful in the Ministry he must restrain his imagination, and adopt language more suited to a country congregation; and, according to Dr. Johnson, one of the expressions was indecent, if not profane. This story, though not without some foundation, inasmuch as Thomson did write a paraphrase of the 104th Psalm, is disproved by incontrovertible facts. No paraphrase in verse of a Psalm could possibly have been admitted as an exercise at the University; and the subject referred to was a prose lecture, or dissertation, on part of the 119th Psalm; but as it may have been written in too flowery a style, and been too redundant in poetical imagery, the censure said to have been pronounced by the Divinity Professor possibly occurred.*

This piece having fallen under the notice of Mr.

* From the information of David Laing, Esq.

Auditor Benson, he expressed his admiration of it; and added, that if the author came to London, he had no doubt his merit would be properly encouraged. When this remark was communicated to Thomson, he determined to try his fortunes in the English metropolis.

Dr. Cranston furnished him with an introduction to two friends, one of whom was Mr. Elliot, probably a brother of Sir Gilbert Elliot. Towards the end of February or at the beginning of March, 1725, about a fortnight before his departure for London, he wrote the following letters to Dr. Cranston. The observations on a future state, which occur in the second of these letters, is the earliest expression of the Poet's religious opinions that has been discovered:—

"Dear Sir, "Edinburgh, February or March, 1725.

"I RECEIVED yours and can never sufficiently resent the regard for my welfare that you show in them. You are so modest as to desire me to correct any thing I see amiss in your letter to Mr. Elliot, and you will transcribe it again; but I assure you I am not so vain as to attempt it: if there was no other thing to bind me to a good behaviour but your recommendation and character of me, I could go great lengths of mortification to answer them. Your letter to my cousin, I do not doubt, will be considerably useful to me, if I can find him out. I remember I heard that Mr. Colden's letter was very serviceable to George Brown. I do not doubt but if Mr. Colden was advertised, I might have one too, and there will be time enough, for our ship sails not this fortnight, yet during that time, if it can contribute any thing to

your diversion, you shall hear from me every opportunity, and when I go to London, you may lay your account of paying out some sixpences. If you have leisure, I could wish to hear from you before I go away, notwithstanding your apostolical conclusion, which I believe is as sincere, and will be as effectual, as the best of them. I am yours,

" J. T."

TO DOCTOR CRANSTON, AT ANCRUM.

" Dear Sir,

" I RECEIVED yours, by which I find you have been as much concerned as Mr. Colden indifferent about me; he, good man, recommends me to God Almighty: very well; but I wish he had exerted something more of the layman on that . . . for, to be deeply serious, the . . . Father of mankind beholds all . . . . offspring with a melting eye . . . needs none to prompt him to acts of goodness, so that I cannot conceive for what purpose people's prayers for one another are, unless it be to stir up humane and social dispositions in themselves. I have gotten several recommendations, and am promised more afterwards, when I am fixed on any particular view, which would make them more pointed and effectual; I shall do all that is in my power, act, hope, and so either make something out, or be buried in obscurity. There is, and I am persuaded of it, I triumph in it, another life after this, which depends as to its happiness on our virtue, as this for the most part on our fortune. My spirits have gotten such a serious turn by these reflections, that although I be thinking on Misjohn, I declare I shall hardly force a laugh before we part, for this I think will be my last letter from Edinburgh, for I expect to sail every day; well, since I was speaking

of that merry soul, I hope he is as bright, as easy, as dégagé, as susceptible of an intense laugh as he used to be; tell him when you see him that I laugh in imagination with him, ha! ha! ha! Mass John, how in the name of wonder dragged you so much good humour along with you through the thorny paths of systems and school divinity, considering the many hardy attempts you have had to epitomize .... and so forth—whenever I began to rust in these —— exercises, the doctor cleared me—well, may wit, humour, and everlasting joy surround you both, and if I but at any time ... kindle up the laugh from London, I shall be sure to ha .... returned upon .. . with greater force. Yours, while I am

" JAMES THOMSON.

" If you have the opportunity to be at Maxton, in Mr. Wilson's, there you will find a treasure of a good comrade, called Peter Murdoch, who will stay there these eight days."

Thomson embarked at Leith, in March, 1725; and soon after his arrival in London he found himself destitute of money. His first want, says Dr. Johnson, was a pair of shoes; who adds that he had many letters of introduction; but, having tied them up in a handkerchief, they were stolen from him.

His first letter to Dr. Cranston, after he came to London, was dated on the 3rd of April, 1725. It expresses many fears for his success, and is interesting from the account which he gives of the impression made upon him by his first visit to the theatres:—

"London, April 3, 1725.

"Dear Sir, "I wish you joy of the spring.

"I HAD yours some days since, the only letter I received since I came from Scotland. I was almost out of humour at the letter I wrote for to Mr. Elliot, since it so curtailed yours to me; I went and delivered it, he received me affably enough, and promised me his assistance, though at the same time he told me, which every one tells me, that it will be prodigiously difficult to succeed in the business you know I design. However, come what will come, I shall make an effort, and leave the rest to Providence. There is, I am persuaded, a necessary fixed chain of things, and I hope my fortune, whatever it be, shall be linked to diligence and honesty. If I should not succeed, in your next advise me what I should do. Succeed or not, I firmly resolve to pursue divinity as the only thing now I am fit for. Now if I cannot accomplish the design on which I came up, I think I had best make interest and pass my trials here, so that if I be obliged soon to return to Scotland again, I may not return no better than I came away: and to be deeply serious with you, the more I see of the vanity and wickedness of the world I am more inclined to that sacred office. I was going to bid you suppress that rising laugh, but I check myself severely again for suffering such an unbecoming thought of you to enter into my mind—so much for business.

"The playhouse is indeed a very fine entertainment, though not to the height I expected. A tragedy, I think, or a fine character in a comedy gives greater pleasure read than acted; but your fools and persons of a very whimsical and humorous character are a delicious morsel on the stage; they indeed exercise my risible faculty, and particularly

your old friend Daniel, in Oroonoko, diverted me infinitely: the gravedigger in Hamlet, Beau Clincher and his brother, in the Trip to the Jubilee, pleased me extremely too. Mr. Booth has a very majestic appearance, a full, harmonious voice, and vastly exceeds them all in acting tragedy. The last act in Cato he does to perfection, and you would think he expired with the 'Oh! that ends it.' Mr. Wilks, I believe, has been a very fine actor for the fine gentleman and the young hero, but his face now is wrinkled, his voice broken; and age forbids the youthful, clear Cibber [?]; I have not seen much of his action yet. Mills and Johnstoun are pretty good actors. Dicky Norris, that little comical, toothless devil, will turn his back and crack a very good jest yet: there are some others of them execrable. Mrs. Oldfield has a smiling jolly face, acts very well in comedy. . . . . Mrs. Porter excels in tragedy, has a short piercing voice, and enters most into her character, and if she did not act well she could not be endured, being more disagreeable in her appearance than any of them. Mrs. Booth acts some things very well, and particularly Ophelia's madness in Hamlet inimitably; but then she dances so deliciously, has such melting lascivious motions, air, and postures, . . . . . indeed the women are generally the handsomest in the house, and better actors than the men, but perhaps their sex prejudices me in their favour. These are a few of the observations I have made hitherto at Drury Lane Theatre, to which I have paid five visits, but have not been at the New House yet. My purse will not keep pace with my inclinations in that matter. O! if I had Mass John here, to see some of their top fools, he would shake the scenes with laughter. Give my service to him. Tell him I laugh at the thoughts

of him, and should be very glad to hear from him. You may send your letters to my mother in Edinburgh in a line inclosed, desiring her to send them to me, which I have directed her to do, frank. However, you may send the next directly to me, to your cousin's care, and perhaps I shall fall upon a more expedite way. I must for the present stop here, and subscribe myself Yours sincerely,

" JAMES THOMSON."

On the 10th of May, 1725, a few weeks after Thomson left Edinburgh, he lost his mother, whom he loved with all a son's tenderness, and to whose talents and virtues he was eminently indebted for the cultivation of his own. In the poem which he wrote to her memory he thus feelingly adverts to the moment when he took his last leave of her:—

" When on the margin of the briny flood
Chill'd with a sad presaging damp I stood,
Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
And mix'd our murmurs with the wavy roar,
Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
Then, wild into the bulging vessel flung,
Which soon, too soon, convey'd me from her sight,
Dearer than life, and liberty, and light!"

Among the few persons of rank to whom Thomson became known in London, was Lord Binning, eldest son of Thomas, sixth Earl of Haddington, who had married Rachel, daughter and heiress of George Baillie of Jerviswood, Esq. by Lady Grizel Hume, eldest daughter of Patrick, first Earl of Marchmont. It appears from the following letter to Dr. Cranston, which is particularly valuable for the information it affords of Thomson's situation and prospects, that he had undertaken to teach

Lord Binning's eldest son Thomas, afterwards seventh Earl of Haddington, then a child five years old, to read:—

"East Barnet, July 20, 1725.

"Dear Doctor,

"I CANNOT imagine the meaning of this long silence, unless my last letter has not come to your hand, which was written two or three months since. I would have seconded it, though unanswered, before now, but one thing and another, particularly the severe affliction of my mother's death, incapacitated me for entertaining my friend. Now I am pretty much at ease in the country, ten miles from London, teaching Lord Binning's son to read, a low task, you know, not so suitable to my temper, but I must learn that necessary lesson of suiting my mind and temper to my state. I hope I shall not pass my time here without improvement, the great design of my coming hither, and then, in due time, I resolve, through God's assistance, to consummate my original study of divinity; for you know the business of a tutor is only precarious and for the present. I approve, every day more and more, of your advice to your brother John, as to the direction of his study; if well pursued, it is as honourable, useful, and certain a method of living as one, in his or my circumstances, could readily fall into . . . . . contemptible notions of things at home, and romantic ones of things abroad; perhaps I was too much affected that way, but I hope in the issue it shall not be worse for me . . . . . what he seemed to be fond of, viz. surgery. It is, as you cannot but know, the merest drug here in the world. Scotland is really fruitful of surgeons, they come here like flocks of vultures every day, and, by a merciful providential

kind of instinct, transport themselves to foreign countries. The Change is quite full of them, where they peruse the ship-bills and meet the sea captains. Pray let John know my sentiments in this matter, because through a giddy discontent I spoke too slightly to him of the study which he has now so happily espoused. I am not now in London, so cannot acquaint you with any thing that passes there within my narrow observation. Being there on Sunday last, I heard that all was very dead both with respect to the scribblers of politics and poetry. As for news you never want too many of them, they increase proportionally to their distance from their source, like rivers, or, since I am in the way of similes, like Discord, as the poets personate her . . . . . small at first, but in a short time her body reaches from the zenith to the nadir, and her arms from one pole to the other, which is the case of fame. To sound as fame is, when great actions make a great noise [?]. So news are a noise commonly about nothing. As for poetry, she is now a very strumpet, and so has lost all her flame, life, and spirit, or rather a common strumpet, passes herself upon the world for the chaste heaven-born virgin. All my other letters from this, if you will favour me with an answer, shall smell of the country. I need not tell you, I have a most affectionate regard for you, and it will give me as real a satisfaction to hear from you as any man: it will be a great pleasure to me likewise to hear of Mr. Riccaltoun's welfare, who deserves encouragement as much as any preacher in Scotland. Mass John and his horse also would make a very good paragraph: give my service to them both; to Mrs. and Miss Cranston, John, &c. Yours sincerely,

" J. Thomson.

"I cannot have a certain account whether Sir William Bennet has lost post or not. Your country news, though they may seem trifling, yet will be acceptable to me. My brother will readily wait upon you, who is just now setting up at Kelso."

Thomson's next letter to Dr. Cranston proves that he was much in want of money. He was then writing his "Winter," the idea of which he had, he says, taken from a poem by Mr. Riccaltoun, which sets at rest the dispute whether "Winter" was composed before or after his arrival in London. This letter* is without a date, but it must have been written in September, 1725; and, as the post mark is Barnet, he was no doubt still with Lord Binning's family:—

"Dear Sir,

"I WOULD chide you for the slackness of your correspondence; but, having blamed you wrongeously last time, I shall say nothing until I hear from you, which I hope will be soon.

"There's a little business I would communicate to you before I come to the more entertaining part of our correspondence.

"I am going, hard task! to complain, and beg your assistance. When I came up here I brought

* [First printed in the London Magazine for Nov. 1824, and thus introduced:—"The following very interesting letter has been recovered from oblivion, or at least from neglect, by our friend Elia, and the public will no doubt thank him for the deed. It is without date or superscription in the manuscript, which (as our contributor declares) was in so 'fragmentitious' a state as to perplex his transcribing faculties in the extreme."]

very little money along with me, expecting some more upon the selling of Widehope, which was to have been sold that day my mother was buried. Now it is unsold yet; but will be disposed of as soon as it can be conveniently done, though indeed it is perplexed with some difficulties. I was a long time living here at my own charges, and you know how expensive that is; this, together with the furnishing of myself with clothes, linen, one thing and another, to fit me for any business of this nature here, necessarily obliged me to contract some debts. Being a stranger, it is a wonder how I got any credit; but I cannot expect it will be long sustained unless I immediately clear it. Even now, I believe, it is at a crisis. My friends have no money to send me till the land is sold, and my creditors will not wait till then. You know what the consequences would be. Now the assistance I would beg of you, and which I know, if in your power, you will not refuse me, is a letter of credit on some merchant, banker, or such like person in London, for the matter of twelve pounds, till I get money upon the selling of the land, which I am at last certain of. If you could either give it me yourself, or procure it, though you owe it not to my merit, yet you owe it to your own nature, which I know so well as to say no more upon the subject; only allow me to add that when I first fell upon such a project (the only thing I have for it in my present circumstances) knowing the selfish, inhumane temper of the generality of the world, you were the first person that offered to my thoughts as one to whom I had the confidence to make such an address.

---

"Now I imagine you seized with a fine, romantic kind of a melancholy on the fading of the year; now

I figure you wandering, philosophical and pensive, amidst the brown, withered groves, while the leaves rustle under your feet, the sun gives a farewell parting gleam, and the birds

'Stir the faint note, and but attempt to sing.'

Then again, when the heavens wear a more gloomy aspect, the winds whistle, and the waters spout, I see you in the well-known cleugh, beneath the solemn arch of tall, thick, embowering trees, listening to the amusing lull of the many steep, moss-grown cascades, while deep, divine Contemplation, the genius of the place, prompts each swelling awful thought. I am sure you would not resign your place in that scene at an easy rate. None ever enjoyed it to the height you do, and you are worthy of it. There I walk in spirit, and disport in its beloved gloom. This country I am in, is not very entertaining; no variety but that of woods, and them we have in abundance; but where is the living stream? the airy mountain? or the hanging rock? with twenty other things that elegantly please the lover of Nature. Nature delights me in every form, I am just now painting her in her most lugubrious dress' for my own amusement, describing Winter as it presents itself. After my first proposal of the subject,

'I sing of Winter, and his gelid reign,
Nor let a rhyming insect of the Spring
Deem it a barren theme. To me 'tis full
Of manly charms; to me, who court the shade,
Whom the gay seasons suit not, and who shun
The glare of Summer, welcome, kindred glooms!
Drear, awful, Wintry horrors, welcome all!' &c.

"After this introduction, I say,

'Nor can I, O, departing Summer! choose
But consecrate one pitying line to you;

Sing your last temper'd days, and sunny calms,
That cheer the spirits and serene the soul.'

Then terrible floods, and high winds, that usually happen about this time of the year, and have already happened here, (I wish you have not felt them too dreadfully;) the first produced the inclosed lines; the last are not completed. Mr. Riccaltoun's Poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head. In it are some masterly strokes that awakened me: being only a present amusement, it is ten to one but I drop it whenever another fancy comes across.

"I believe it had been much more for your entertainment if in this letter I had cited other people instead of myself, but I must refer that until another time. If you have not seen it already, I have just now in my hands an original of Sir Alexander Brand's, the crazed Scots Knight with the woeful countenance, you would relish. I believe it might make Mass John catch hold of his knees, which I take in him to be a degree of mirth only inferior to falling back again with an elastic spring. It is very .... printed in the Evening Post, so perhaps you have seen these panegyrics of our declining bard; one on the Princess's birthday, the other on his Majesty's, in .... cantos: they are written in the spirit of a complicated craziness.

"I was in London lately a night, and in the old play-house saw a comedy acted, called 'Love makes a Man, or the Fop's Fortune,' where I beheld Miller and Cibber shine to my infinite entertainment. In and about London this month of September near a hundred people have died by accident and suicide. There was one blacksmith, tired of the hammer, who hanged himself, and left written behind him this concise epitaph,

'I, Joe Pope,
Lived without hope,
And died by a rope;"

or else some epigrammatic muse has belied him.

"Mr. Muir has ample fund for politics in the present posture of affairs, as you will find by the public news. I should be glad to know that great minister's frame just now. Keep it to yourself. You may whisper it, too, in Mass John's ear: far otherwise is his late mysterious brother Mr. Tait employed,—started a superannuated fortune, and just now upon the full scent. It is comical enough to see him from amongst the rubbish of his controversial divinity and politics, furbishing up his ancient rustic gallantry.

"Yours sincerely, J. T.

"Remember me to all friends, Mr. Rickle, Mass John, Brother John, &c."

Thomson's earliest patron in London was Mr. Duncan Forbes of Culloden, afterwards Lord President of the Session; who is thus commemorated in "The Seasons,"

"Thee, Forbes, too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind,
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels through her reviving arts,
Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd;
And seldom has she known a friend like thee."

Having seen his poetry in Scotland, Mr. Forbes received him with kindness: recommended him to the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Burlington, Sir Robert Walpole, Dr. Arbuthnot, Pope and Gay. Among Mr. Forbes's other friends, to whom he introduced Thomson, was Mr. Aikman, a gentleman moving in high society. The friendship of Aikman

was so much appreciated by Thomson, that he wrote some verses on his death, in June, 1731. He was however perhaps more indebted for attention and kindness to Mr. Mallet, his school fellow, than to any other person. Mallet was then private tutor in the family of the Duke of Montrose. Thomson is supposed to have been introduced by Mallet to many brother poets and wits of the day; and he was assisted by him in negotiating the publication of his first work.

The poem of "Winter," which, reversing the natural order, proved the harbinger of "The Seasons," appeared in folio in March, 1726. As soon as the poem was published Mallet brought it to the notice of Mr. Aaron Hill. After Hill had read the piece, he stated his opinion of it in a letter to Mallet, which threw its author into such a tumult of joy, as to bring forth the following extraordinary letter:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Sir, "April 5, 1726.

"HAVING seen a letter you wrote to my friend Mr. Mallet, on Saturday last, though I cannot boast the honour and happiness of your acquaintance, and ought with the utmost deference and veneration to approach so supreme a genius, yet my full heart is not to be repressed by formalities; and you must allow me the pleasure of pouring forth my best acknowledgments.

"I will not affect a moderate joy at your approbation, your praise: it pleases, it delights, it ravishes me! Forgive me for the lowness of the truth, when I vow, I'd rather have it than the acclamations of thousands: 'tis so sincere, so delicate, so distinguishing,

so glowing, and what peculiarly marks and endears it, so beautifully generous. That great mind, and transcendent humanity, that appear in the testimony you have been pleased to give my first attempt, would have utterly confounded me, if I had not been prepared for such an entertainment, by your well-known character; which the voice of fame, and your own masterly writings, loudly proclaim.

"It would both be disingenuous, and rudely unjust, in me, after what you have observed, to dissemble my satisfaction at several passages in the poem: this let me say, that your reflections have entered into the very soul of my purpose, and, even to myself, cast a light over the whole.

"How rare, how happy, is it to find a judge whose discerning goodness overlooks the faults of what is well meant, at the same time that his fine enthusiastic taste improves the beauties. To you alone it belongs to write so inimitably, and to read so indulgently. If I wrote all that my admiration of your perfections, and my gratitude dictate, I should never have done; but, lest I tire you, I'll for the present rather put a violence on myself: only let me cherish one hope further—of being, some time or other, admitted into the most instructive and entertaining company in the world. I am, with the greatest devotion, Sir, your most obliged and most faithful, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Mr. Hill's reply increased the poet's transports, and he thus acknowledged its receipt:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Sir, "April 18, 1726.

"I RECEIVED yours with a soul awakened all to joy, gratitude, and ambition. There is such a noble ex-

cellence of mind, so much uncommon goodness, and generosity of heart, in every thing you say, as at once charms and astonishes me. As you think, imagine, and write, with a diviner warmth, superior to the rest of mankind; so the very praises you bestow, bear the stamp of eminence, and reflect stronger on yourself. While I meditate your encouraging lines, for a while I forget the selfishness, degeneracy, and cruelty of men, and seem to be associated with better and more exalted beings.

"The social love, of which you are so bright an example, though it be the distinguishing ornament of humanity, yet there are some ill-natured enough to degrade it into a modification of self love, according to them, its original. Those gentlemen, I am afraid, mingle their tempers too much with their speculations. Self-love is, indeed, indispensably necessary for the well-being of every individual, but carries not along with it an idea of moral beauty and perfection; whereas social love is of quite another nature; the just and free exercise of which, in a particular manner, renders one amiable, and divine. The accomplished man I admire, the honest man I trust; but it is only the truly generous man I entirely love. Humanity is the very smile and consummation of virtue; it is the image of that fair perfection in the Supreme Being, which, while he was infinitely happy in himself, moved him to create a world of beings to make them so. The excellent ones of the earth, in the exercise of social love, feel it as much to be an original impulse, as the low world that blind affection, they bear themselves: nor are they, in the least, conscious of that forced, cold reasoning, by which it is deduced from so mean an original. How many deathless heroes, patriots, and martyrs have been so gloriously concerned

for the good of mankind and so strongly actuated by social love, as frequently to act in direct contradiction to that of self? A great many more arguments might be adduced to prove that social love is a nobler independent principle, by itself, were not the secret sense, that every good man has of the matter, instead of a thousand.

"Your writings, while they glow with innumerable instances of strong thinking, and sublime imagination, are peculiarly marked with this beautiful benevolence of mind; and it is that which, at this time, has awakened, in me, these reflections.

"I am ravished with the hope you give me, of your nearer acquaintance; and that it should ever prove unprofitable, is as impossible, as that it should not be, in the highest degree, delightful to, Sir, your most obliged and most faithful, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Thomson paid his first visit to Mr. Hill on the 26th of April; and his delight and gratitude on the occasion were expressed in terms of the grossest adulation. It seems scarcely possible, even with the largest allowance for the difference in their positions, to understand how any man could write to another in such a strain. Savage, who was of the party, is said to have "remained bleak and withered under the influence of Hill's conversation!"

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Sir, "April 27, 1726.

"WHEN I reflect how truly happy I was, yesterday, in your company, it is impossible for me to restrain my sense of it from breaking out into this acknowledgment. There is, in your conversation, such a beauty,

truth, force, and elegance of thought, and expression; such animated, fine sense, and chastised fancy; so much dignity and condescension, sublimity and sweetness; in a word, such a variety of entertainment and instruction, as is beyond all admiration. Your smiles have all the encouraging power of humanity in them. What one says, is received with great taste and indulgence; and to listen to you, gives one a secret, and more ravishing pleasure, than to be author of the best things in other company.

"There is downright inspiration in your society. It enlarges and exalts all the powers of the soul, chases every low thought, throws the passions into the most agreeable agitations, and gives the heart the most affecting sentiments—'Tis moral harmony! It gives me an additional pleasure to reflect how justly pleased, too, Mr. Savage was.

"Nothing is, to me, a stronger instance of the unimprovable nature of that unhappy creature of whom you speak so compassionately, notwithstanding of the barbarous provocation he has given you, than his remaining bleak, and withered, under the influences of your conversation—a certain sign of a field that the Lord has cursed.

"There is none that renders human nature more amiable than you; and at the same time, none that renders the greatest part of it more contemptible: and to descend from your company, and mingle with the herd of mankind, is like Nebuchadnezzar's descending from a throne, to graze with the beasts of the field.

"Now I feast on reflection—and am like a poor man, that has brought as much from a rich entertainment with him, as must sustain him for many days afterwards. What charms and amuses me, in a particular manner, is, the account you gave us of that

little seraph, the young Urania! Her elegant turn of mind; her innocence, and goodness, in the choice of her subjects; her fancy, judgment, and ambition, above her years; and the beautiful struggle of the last (it is unfair to call it vanity), occasioned by the rude stupidity of the school boy, are most agreeably surprising. What you, obligingly, observed of good company's being Ariosto's fountain of thirst, is remarkably true of yours—I shall long impatiently for the farther refreshment of it; and am, with the most entire regard, Dear Sir, your most obliged, and most faithful, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

"Winter" was inscribed* to Sir Spencer Compton, Speaker of the House of Commons, afterwards Earl of Wilmington, but Thomson's motive for selecting him as his patron, is unknown. Dr. Johnson says the poem was unnoticed by Sir Spencer Compton until Aaron Hill roused his attention to it by some verses addressed to Thomson in the newspapers, which censured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Of those verses some particulars occur in a letter from Thomson to Mr. Hill; but that letter is of most interest from its

* Mr. Bolton Corney says the dedication was written by Mallet. [Thomson and Mallet were both educated at the University of Edinburgh. Thomson came up to town without any certain view: Mallet got him into a nobleman's family as a tutor; he did not like that affair, left it in about three quarters of a year, and came down to Mallet at Twyford. There he wrote single winter peices; they at last thought it might make a Poem. It was at first refused by the printer, but received by another. Mallet wrote the Dedication to the Speaker. Dodington sent his services to Thomson by Dr. Young and desired to see him; that was thought hint enough for another dedication to him: and this was his first introduction to that acquaintance.—*Mallet.* Spence by Singer, p. 327.]

showing that he had left his situation in Lord Binning's family, and accepted the office of tutor to a young gentleman in an academy kept by Mr. Watts in Little Tower Street:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Oldman's Coffee House,
May 24, 1726.

"Dear Sir,

"I HOPE that your uncommon goodness will forgive me, what I scarcely can forgive myself, my not having, hitherto, answered the last encouraging letter, and copy of verses, you honoured me with. The approbation which, out of the fulness of a beneficent heart, you are pleased to give me, I am fond and ambitious of, next to that of Heaven: it is my best reward for what I have done, and a noble incitement to go on. When you approve, my whole soul is awaked and charmed. Pleasing is your praise, but severe is your satire. It is particularly marked with exalted sentiment, and generous contempt. There is a force in it, that strikes through the heart; and a majesty not to be expressed. In a word, it is the unaffected resentment of a great mind.

"It is impossible for me, in the compass of this letter, to say how much I admire every particular line; yet it is as impossible for me to restrain myself from dwelling on some.

'Smile at your vanish'd hope—convinced, too late,
That greatness dwells not, always, with the great.'*

"I feel the first line too sensibly; and, the last finely insinuates the absurdity of vulgar and hereditary greatness. Your sinking of the Lord's unlasting name

* These lines were altered to
"Fruitless dependance oft has found too late
That greatness rarely dwells among the great."

in the depth of time, is pleasingly and nobly just: Sir John Falstaff sunk not with greater alacrity, in a literal sense, than they and all their fopperies do in a metaphorical.

"I never read any thing more glorious, than the four following lines,

'Patrons are nature's nobles, not the state's;
And wit's a title, no broad seal creates.
Kings, from whose bounty wealth's chief currents flow,*
Are poor in power, when they would souls bestow.'

They are the most divine triumph of merit and virtue, that was ever writ. The best way of displaying all their beauties is to read them a thousand and a thousand times over. Your description of the court-haunting, wink-observing bard, is so natural, that, if I am not mistaken, it may be found a picture of some living originals. The last paragraph is very strongly and delicately wrought off; but so favourable to me, as obliges me to suppress all sentiments, save such as flow from gratitude; with which my heart is as full, as yours is with goodness and perfection. You have given me fame; and what have I to return you, but the acknowledgment of a grateful soul?

"How powerfully was I charmed with the four acts of Elfrid, you were so condescendingly good as to read us! There is in them such a rich assemblage of all the excellencies of the best poetry, as is not anywhere to be found. I never met, before, with such a force, and dignity of passion. My heart trembles, yet, when I reflect. But I will not cramp my admiration into the small space this letter allows.

"Mr. Mallet is now gone into the country, where he justly expects to be vastly entertained, and in-

* This line was changed to
"E'en Kings from whose high source all honours flow."

structed, by your correspondence. I have been somewhat melancholy since his departure, touched with these pensive emotions, parting with such a friend gives;

'Bounteous Creator of the tender heart!
Is there no world, where friends shall never part?
Be that our future lot, and of such bliss
Grant us an earnest, ere we die, in this.'

"I go, on Saturday next, to reside at Mr. Watts's Academy in Little Tower-street, in quality of tutor to a young gentleman there. Since you have been pleased to raise me, in some measure, to the new life of your favour, let me never fall from it, but frequently be allowed the honour of subscribing myself, dear Sir, your most obliged, and most devoted, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

The efforts of Mr. Hill aided, it is said, by those of the Reverend Robert Whatley, a gentleman of acknowledged taste, who commended the work wherever he visited, soon exhausted the edition.*

Accompanied, apparently by Mallet, Thomson

* To this edition Thomson added the letters "M.A." to his name, but his right to do so is very doubtful; and it was omitted on every other occasion. Warton says, "When Thomson published his Winter, in 1726, it lay a long time neglected, till Mr. Spence made honourable mention of it in his Essay on the Odyssey; which, becoming a popular book, made the Poem universally known. Thomson always acknowledged the use of this recommendation; and from this circumstance an intimacy commenced between the critic and the poet, which lasted till the lamented death of the latter, who was of a most amiable and benevolent temper. I have before me a letter of Mr. Spence to [Christopher] Pitt, earnestly begging him to subscribe to the quarto edition of Thomson's Seasons, and mentioning a design which Thomson had formed of writing a descriptive poem on Blenheim; a subject that would have shone in his hands."

waited upon Sir Spencer Compton, on the 4th of June, 1726, and in the afternoon sent the annexed note to Mr. Hill:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Sir, "June 4, 1726.

"Mr. Bowman and I are at Long's Coffee House, in Queen Square, Westminster; and, if it be consistent with your conveniency, would be glad to attend the honour and happiness, of your company, as you shall be pleased to direct. Mr. Mallet left with me, what they call a Spanish cheese, which he begs you to accept of. At last, I have been with the Speaker, this morning; but would rather give you an account of my reception by word of mouth. We beg pardon for this freedom, which the delightful prospect of your company irresistibly tempts us to. I am, Sir, with the deepest respect, your most obliged, and most devoted, humble servant,

"James Thomson."

Not having seen Hill, he wrote to him again three days afterwards, giving him an account of his interview with the Speaker. The inconvenience of having excited a patron's liberality by reproaches is amusingly shown by the dilemma in which Thomson now found himself. Before receiving Sir Spencer Compton's donation, Mallet, as well as Hill, had written verses upon his neglect of the Poet, which were intended to be prefixed to the second edition of "Winter," then in the press. But the Speaker's present rendered some of the lines inapplicable, if not unjust; and as they were too flattering to the Bard's vanity to be suppressed, he thus states his embarrassment:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"June 7, 1726.

"Dear Sir,

"ENCOURAGED by that most divine of all virtues, your charming goodness, I frequently, you see, take the liberty to address you. On Saturday last I wrote to you, from a coffee-house in Westminster, but had the misfortune to hear you were gone out, only half an hour, before the letter was sent. Flattering myself, then, with some hopes of your company, I did not mention a copy of verses I received, on Friday last, from Mr. Mallet, to be prefixed to the second edition of 'Winter;' and which I send you enclosed. That you should read them, was his particular desire, in the following terms:—'Offer my verses to Mr. Hill's perusal, and tell him, that I will not determine their fate, till I first learn his opinion of them: for I know him too nobly sincere, to indulge my vanity, at the expense of your credit. Say, likewise, that I will shortly venture to make use of that permission he so generously granted me, of writing to him, as often as my fear of becoming troublesome will let me.' All that I shall observe concerning them, to such a finished judge as you are, is, that their only glorious fault, if they have any, is an excess of that beautiful benevolence of mind, which, among a thousand other things, make you and him so greatly amiable.

"I hinted to you in my last, that, on Saturday morning, I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A certain gentleman, without my desire, spoke to him concerning me; his answer was, that I had never come near him: then the gentleman put the question, if he desired that I should wait on him; he returned, he did: on this, the gentleman gave me an introductory letter to him. He received me in what they commonly call a civil manner, asked me some common-place questions,

and made me a present of twenty guineas. I am very ready to own, that the present was larger than my performance deserved; and shall ascribe it to his generosity, or any other cause, rather than the merit of the address.

"As the case now is, one of your infinite delicacy will be the best judge, whether it will be proper to print these two inimitable copies of verses I have from you, and Mr. Mallet, without such little alterations as shall clear Sir Spencer of that best satire I ever read. I shall say no more on that head; for if there be any reasons for such alterations, you will, of necessity, at one glance, see them in the strongest and finest light. Only this let me add, should you find that the case required some small alterations, and yet not indulge me with them, I shall reckon what my patron gave me, a fatal present. 'Tis a thought too shocking to be borne—to lose the applause of the great genius of the age, my charter of fame! for—I will not name it! But you are too good to plague me so severely. I expect this favour from Mr. Mallet, next post.

"When you honour me with an answer, for which I shall be anxious, please to direct for me at Mr. Watt's Academy, in Little Tower-street. I am, dear Sir, with the most hearty respect, your most devoted, and most humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

On the 11th of June he sent Mr. Hill the proof sheets of the new edition of "Winter;" and it appears from the letter which accompanied them, that he took it for granted that Hill would comply with his wishes about the verses, but that Mallet found an excuse for not changing his lines, perhaps

justly, considering that the generosity which was called into action only by shame well deserved the original reproach.

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

" London, June 11, 1726.

" Dear Sir,

" I HAVE been, for some days last past, in the country, else the enclosed sheets, to which you yourself have given the greatest sanction and value, should have waited on you ere now.

" It was your approbation that gave me, formerly, an equally just and noble satisfaction; and the continuance of it is my inviolable ambition. Since I put you to the trouble of altering your verses, I ought to give you an account why Mr. Mallet's were not altered likewise. The truth is, he promised me to alter them, as I wrote to you; but in a following letter told me, that, after several attempts, he found it absolutely out of his power; and, rather than lose them, I resolved to print them, as they at first were. To this resolution your last favourable letter, in a great measure, raised me: and who, that has a soul in him, could forbear to follow the advice you give me, in those generous lines?

> ' Heedless of fortune, then look down on state,
> Balanced, within, by reason's conscious weight:
> Divinely proud of independent will,
> Prince of your passions, live their sovereign still.'

" I wish, that the declaration, from my heart, with regard to you, in the preface, may not be disagreeable. These sentiments I could not suppress; and they are but a faint expression of the full esteem and admiration I shall ever bear you. May I hope that one of the enclosed copies of my poem can be acceptable to a lady of Mrs. Hill's fine taste, and the young

darling of the Muses, Urania, who, in such a tender age, has encountered with all the horrors of so rough a description? Shall I languish out a whole summer in the same city with you, and not once be re-inspired with your company? Such a happiness would much brighten my description of that season; from which, to fill out this letter, I venture to transcribe the following lines,

'Oft in this season, too, the horse, provoked,
While his big sinews, full of spirits, swell,
Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,
Springs the high fence; and o'er the field effused,
Darts on the gloomy flood, with steady eye,
And heart estranged to fear; his nervous chest,
The seat of strength! bears down th' opposing stream,
Luxuriant, and erect: quenchless his thirst,
He takes the river at redoubled draughts,
And, with wide nostrils, snorting, skims the wave.'

"In your last you were pleased to threaten me, as you term it, with a long letter. I beg you would be as exact, in the execution of your threatenings, as you always are, in the performance of your promises; which shall be submitted to, with the most cheerful resignation, by him who is, dear Sir, with the utmost devotion, your most obliged, and most obedient, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Mallet at last promised to alter his verses; but he was still in doubt how far Mr. Hill would imitate his example:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Sir, "London, June 17, 1726.

"I HAD the enclosed for you, from Mr. Mallet this day, which emboldens me to give you the present trouble. He is so good as to promise me another

copy of verses, next post, which gives me a very great pleasure: but my satisfaction is far from being complete, so long as I am uncertain of the like favour from you. Perhaps my forwardness, if not vanity, presumes too much on your goodness; but your already wondrous generosity, in this regard, has raised in me an expectation and ambition you ought, in all poetical justice, to satisfy. If you knew the gladness it would inspire into my heart, you would, certainly, steal a kind hour from your more important affairs, to smile upon my, I will not scruple to say, reasonable fondness. But by being importunate, I shall offer an injury to your ever-ready humanity.

"All that I shall further add is, that on Monday next the Poem will be printed off. I am, Sir, with the utmost gratitude and regard, your most devoted, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON.

"P.S. The press, if you please, shall wait your leisure."

It would not be easy to ascertain if Mallet did alter his verses, but in those of Hill some changes seem to have been made.

In a long preface Thomson entered into a defence of Poetry, complained of the debasing subjects to which it was chiefly applied, and contended that the works of Nature are most calculated to produce poetical enthusiasm. He then expressed his gratitude to Mr. Hill and to Mr. Mallet for their verses, as well as to a lady, (according to Dr. Johnson, but too well known,*) who had graced his poem

* ["Mira" was a Mrs. Martha Sansom, daughter of a Major Fowke. She died in 1736, aged 46. She had another poetical name in print—Mira was also Clio. (See *The Athenæum, July* 16, 1859, p. 78.)]

with some lines under the signature of "Mira;" and he announced his intention of treating of the other Seasons.

"Winter" was universally read and almost as universally admired, and produced to the author the acquaintance of several ladies of rank, among whom were the Countess of Hertford (afterwards Duchess of Somerset), Miss Drelincourt, daughter of the Dean of Armagh, who became Viscountess Primrose, and Mrs. Stanley; but the most valuable result of the Poem was the friendship of Dr. Thomas Rundle, afterwards Bishop of Derry. That learned person, finding the man to be as estimable as the Poet, honoured him with his friendship, spread his fame, and by introducing him to Sir Charles Talbot, afterwards Lord Chancellor, rendered him an important service.

In Thomson's next letter to Mr. Hill, who was then in Scotland, he thanks him for a flattering notice which he had published of "Winter," and sends him the news of the town:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Dear Sir, "London, Oct. 20, 1726.

"Mr. Savage was so kind as to shew me a letter you lately favoured him with, by which I had the true pleasure of learning your safe arrival at Berwick, intended tour, and halt at Inverness.

"It is with a mixture of joy, pride, and confusion, I read the favourable mention you were pleased to make of me: what unusual good fortune has thus intitled me to your kind regard? 'Tis nothing, sure, but your own generous goodness, which with your other many matchless perfections, shall ever be my

love, and wonder, while truth and harmony are the objects of these passions.

"Every Muse, every Virtue, here, languishes for your return: to me your absence would be much severer, if my partial sympathy in the happiness of my native country did not alleviate the misfortune. I congratulate her on the presence of such a kind inspirer and candid observer: there, you may chance to find, in that neglected corner of the world, depressed merit uninformed beauty, and good sense clothed in the rags of language. Nothing has appeared in print here, since your departure, unless it be some mushroomish pamphlets, beings of a summer's night, whose only merit is the violent propension with which they tend into oblivion. Memory abhors them, and their essence is, to die. I beg Mr. Pope's pardon, some of whose letters to Mr. Cromwell, were surreptitiously printed by Curll; and yet, though writ careless, and uncorrected, full of wit and gaiety. We have got, O rare! a rostrum, and an orator! since you left us; whose pretended great design is to restore primitive Christianity; and his hopeful candidates are all the beaus, and pretty powdered fellows about town. You were, a week or two ago, traduced by the praises of one of our journalists, who can no more understand the beauties of your writings, than you write to his understanding. A new torrent of Italian farces is lately poured in upon us. The advertisement, which just now lies before me, and begins thus—'By his Majesty's command, at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, to-morrow, being Friday the 21st of October, will be acted, by the company of Italian comedians newly arrived, a comedy called The Enchanted Island of Arcadia, or Arlequin King of the Forests,' &c. is such a maze of incredible impertinence,

and promises so much folly, that it is to be presumed the house will be very full, and that, too, with persons of the first quality.

"May you soon return to town, resume the Plain-dealer, and, if we are not devoted to destruction, restore the great dramatic taste by that tragedy, part of which I had the honour and sublime pleasure of hearing read, by the finest reader, as well as the finest author, in England.

"If your business will allow me one line, please to direct for me at the Academy in Little Tower-street. I am, dear Sir, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Only one other letter to Mr. Hill has been found after March, 1727, for six years:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Oldman's Coffee-house, Monday morn. March 4, 1726-7.

"Dear Sir,

"THE news of your safe arrival in town gave me a joy I have not felt since the receipt of your most agreeable letter from the north of Scotland. But while I have not the honour of seeing you, Westminster is at a more gloomy distance, than Skor-urran's snowy top.

"Mr. Mallet, and I, wish, with the fondest impatience, the happiness of your company: which, if we may hope this afternoon, we'll wait upon you, as you shall please to appoint, by a short line with the bearer. I will not make any apology for this freedom to one of your unbounded goodness. I am, with the most inviolable regard, dear Sir, your devoted humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Thomson's life for several years can only be traced in his works. It is probable, however, that he quitted the Academy in Tower-street towards the end of 1726 or early in 1727, and trusted to his pen for subsistence. Some time in 1727 he published his "Summer," and "Britannia."* He also issued "Proposals for printing by subscription 'The Four Seasons, with a Hymn on their succession,'" "A Poem to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton," and an "Essay on descriptive Poetry," but the Essay never appeared. In this Advertisement he pledged himself that the separate publication of his "Spring" should not prevent "The Seasons" from being published in the ensuing winter. The Poem on the death of Sir Isaac Newton, which he dedicated, but with what advantage to himself is unknown, to Sir Robert Walpole, was published in the June of 1727. This dedication, which was omitted in all subsequent editions,† is worth preserving:—

"To the Right Honourable Sir Robert Walpole, Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter.

"Sir,

"Since I have ventured to write a poem on a gentleman who is universally acknowledged to be the honour

* ["Britannia" was not published until January, 1729. It appeared anonymously from the shop of T. Warner in Paternoster Row, and bears, as a disguise, on its title-page that it was "written in 1719." Later title-pages state that it was "written in 1727."]

† In the original folio edition of the poem, the title-page contains this motto:—

"His tibi me rebus quædam divina Voluptas
Percepit, atque Horror; quod sic Natura tuâ vi
Tam manifesta patet ex omni parte retecta.
LUCRETIUS."

of our country as a philosopher, prompted by the same ambition I address it to her most illustrious patriot.

"Though by the wise choice of the best of Kings, you are engaged in the highest and most active scenes of life, balancing the power of Europe, watching over our common welfare, informing the whole body of society and commerce, and even, like Heaven, dispensing happiness to the discontented and ungrateful; though thus gloriously employed, yet are you not less attentive, in the hour of leisure, to the variety, beauty, and magnificence of nature, nor less delighted, and astonished at the discoveries of the incomparable Newton. The same comprehensive genius which way soever it looks must have a steady, clear, and unbounded prospect.

"But not to encroach any further on your important moments, all devoted to the good of mankind, I once more plead the dignity of my subject for my excuse in this approach, and beg leave to subscribe myself, with the sincerest veneration, Sir, your most faithful, humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

It is said that he asked Lord Binning's permission to inscribe his "Summer" to him, but that nobleman generously sacrificed the compliment to his desire of advancing the Poet's interests; and at his lordship's suggestion, it was dedicated to Mr. Bubb Dodington, then a Lord of the Treasury, in that humble strain of panegyric by which, happily, authors no longer disgrace themselves.

In his eulogy on Newton, Thomson was assisted by his friend Gray,* who, being well acquainted

* John Gray, author of a Treatise on Gunnery, who in 1765 was elected Rector of Marischal College, Aberdeen, and died 1769.

with the Newtonian Philosophy, furnished him with a sufficient idea of its principles to enable him to allude to the subject with correctness. "Britannia" owed its existence to the displeasure of the English merchants at the interruption of our trade by the Spaniards in America. Thomson was particularly alive to impressions of public liberty, and eagerly availed himself of a moment of political excitement to indulge his feelings.

In 1728, he published his "Spring," and dedicated it to Frances Countess of Hertford, wife of Algernon then Earl of Hertford, afterwards Duke of Somerset. This lady, whose generous intercession in favour of Savage preserved his life, not only patronized poetry, but was herself a votary of the Muses;* and her letters create a very favourable impression both of her heart and her understanding. If the dedication may be relied on, Spring "grew up under her encouragement," and Thomson was for one summer the guest of her ladyship at her country seat;† but Johnson says he took more plea-

* On the 15th of May, 1748, the Countess of Hertford in a letter to Lady Luxborough, noticed Thomson's Castle of Indolence in the following terms:—"I conclude you will read Mr. Thomson's Castle of Indolence: it is after the manner of Spenser; but I think he does not always keep so close to his style as the author of the School Mistress, whose name I never knew till you were so good as to inform me of it.——I believe the Castle of Indolence will afford you much entertainment; there are many pretty paintings in it; but I think the wizard's song deserves a preference:

'He needs no muse who dictates from the heart.'"

† [At Marlborough in Wiltshire, where Stephen Duck tells us (Poems, 1737, 4to. p. 212), "Mr. Thomson composed one of his Seasons."]

sure in carousing with her lord than in assisting her studies, and therefore was never again invited.

The tragedy of "Sophonisba," which was written and acted in 1729,* was his next production; and such were the expectations excited by the author's fame, that the rehearsals were attended by splendid audiences: though, if Johnson be correct, nobody was much affected, and the company rose as if from a moral lecture. Among those who honoured the tragedy with particular regard was the Queen, to whom, on that account, it was dedicated. In the preface the author pleads in extenuation of the errors of the piece, that it was a first attempt: he explains his reasons for choosing its subject, and thanks Mr. Wilks, and more especially Mrs. Oldfield, for their powerful representations of Masinissa and Sophonisba, the latter having, he says, "excelled what even in the fondness of an author he could either wish or imagine."

The success of this tragedy on the stage was not great, though it went through four editions in the year 1730; and Dr. Johnson ascribes one cause of its failure to a foolish parody of the silly line, omitted in subsequent impressions,

"Oh, Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!
"O Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, O!"†

* [An unacknowledged production of the year 1729, was, "A Poem to the Memory of Mr. Congreve, inscribed to Her Grace Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough;" first ascribed to Congreve by Cary the translator of Dante, on whose admirable judgment I induced the Percy Society to reprint it in 1843.]

† [This parody, said to be by a smart from the pit, (Cibber's Lives, v. 209,) was first printed in "A Criticism on the New Sophonisba: London, F. Cogan, 1730," 8vo. p. 22. This bitter

which was very generally repeated through the town. Johnson says, on the assertion of Savage, that Pope wrote the first part of the prologue; and as he could not be persuaded to finish it, that the remaining lines were added by Mallet; but the following passage in a letter from Pope to Aaron Hill, dated on the 29th of September, 1731, makes it very doubtful if Pope wrote any part of that prologue. In reply to Hill's request that he would furnish him with an epilogue to his tragedy of "Athelwold," Pope says, "You will, I am sure, be so candid and so reasonable as to conclude I would not decline writing your epilogue on any but a just reason, and indeed (to me) an invariable maxim which I have held these twenty years. Every poetical friend I have has my word I never would, and my leave to take the same refusals I made him ill if ever I wrote one for another; and this very winter Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet excuse me, whose tragedies either are to appear this season or the next."

A complete edition of "the Seasons" appeared in 1730, when "Autumn," which Thomson addressed to the Right Honourable Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, and the beautiful "Hymn" were first printed. A very material difference exists between "the Seasons" as they

attack on Thomson (it has escaped his biographers) is evidently written by some friend of Benjamin Martyr, author of "Timoleon," a tragedy acted at Drury Lane, 26 of January 1729-30, a month before "Sophonisba." Thomson was present, the critic tells, at the performance of Timoleon, "and could not stifle his envy, which burst into expressions very unbecoming a brother adventurer."]

were then published and as they now stand. From time to time Thomson polished his work with great assiduity and success, perhaps from the anticipation that by it he would be best known to posterity. To this labour he was probably excited by an epistle from Somervile, who asks,

> "Why should thy Muse, born so divinely fair,
> Want the reforming toilet's daily care?
> Dress the gay maid, improve each native grace,
> And call forth all the glories of her face:
> The accomplish'd nymph in all her best attire,
> Courts shall applaud, and prostrate crowds admire;
> For kind and wise the parent, who reproves
> The slightest blemish in the child he loves.
> Read Philips much, consider Milton more,
> But from their dross extract the purer ore.
> Let perspicuity o'er all preside,—
> Soon shalt thou be the nation's joy and pride."

Dr. Johnson admits that these revisions improved the poems in general: but he expresses his suspicion that they lost their *race*. A few examples of the benefit which they derived from reflection and criticism prove that this remark displays more ingenuity than taste.* His nephew Dr. Bell intended to publish an edition of "the Seasons" with all the variations;† and in a letter to the Earl of Buchan, in September, 1791, he said, "I have begun to collate the 'Seasons'—the edition 1730 with that of 1744. As I proceed in the work, I have more and more reason to think that my labour will

* Mr. Bolton Corney has clearly shown the additions made to each edition of "the Seasons" in a tabular form. Altogether Thomson added 5541 lines.

† [An intention which no one can carry out. Wordsworth tried it—Mr. Dyce tried it—I have tried it.]

not be unworthy of the attention of the public. A great many beautiful passages in the edition of 1730 are entirely struck out of all subsequent editions, and the other alterations made are considerable. The improvements made on the edition 1744 are highly important." Dr. Bell did not execute his design, but a duodecimo edition of "the Seasons" was published by Sibbald, at Edinburgh, in 1789, containing the principal variations between the last and previous impressions.

Through the influence of Dr. Rundle, who, on sending Mrs. Sandys a copy of "the Seasons," observed, that it was "a volume on which reason bestows as many beauties as imagination," Thomson was chosen in 1730 by Sir Charles Talbot, then Solicitor General, to accompany his eldest son, Mr. Charles Richard Talbot, on his travels. With this accomplished young man he passed through France to Italy in parts of the years 1730 and 1731. Admitted to the best society, unembarrassed by pecuniary considerations, and encouraged by the rising influence and generosity of his patron, to hope for a permanent independence, if not for a situation calculated for the display of talents, this must have been the happiest period of the poet's life.

During his absence from England he appears to have kept up a correspondence with Mr. Dodington, to whom he had dedicated his "Summer;" and his letters,* which show that he was on terms of intimacy with that gentleman, justify a more favourable opinion of his epistolary powers than any others that have appeared.

* First printed in "Seward's Anecdotes," vol. v. p. 137.

TO MR. DODINGTON.

" Paris, December 27, N. S. 1730.

" M. DE VOLTAIRE's Brutus has been acted here seven or eight times with applause, and still continues to be acted. It is matter of amusement to me to imagine what ideas an old Roman republican, declaiming on liberty, must give the generality of a French audience. Voltaire, in his preface, designs to have a stroke at criticism; and Lord have mercy on the poor similes at the end of the acts in our English plays, for these seem to be very worthy objects of his French indignation. It is designed to be dedicated to Lord Bolingbroke . . . . . .

" I have seen little of Paris, yet some streets and playhouses; though, had I seen all that is to be seen here, you know it too well to need a much better account than I can give. You must, however, give me leave to observe, that amidst all that external and showy magnificence which the French affect, one misses that solid magnificence of trade and sincere plenty which not only appears to be, but is, substantially, in a kingdom where industry and liberty mutually support and inspirit each other. That kingdom I suppose I need not mention, as it is, and ever will be, sufficiently plain from the character. I shall return no worse Englishman than I came away.

" Your observation I find every day juster and juster, that one may profit more abroad by seeing than by hearing; and yet there are scarce any travellers to be met with, who have given a landscape of the countries through which they have travelled that have seen (as you express it) with the Muses' eye; though that is the first thing which strikes me, and what all readers and travellers in the first place demand. It seems to me, that such a poetical landscape of countries,

mixed with moral observations on their government and people, would not be an ill judged undertaking. But then, the description of the different face of nature, in different countries, must be particularly marked and characteristic, the portrait painting of nature."

"October, 24, 1731.

"WHAT you observe concerning the pursuit of poetry (so far engaged in it as I am) is certainly just. Besides, let him quit it who can, and 'erit mihi magnus Apollo,' or something as great. A true genius, like light, must be beaming forth, as a false one is an incurable disease. One would not, however, climb Parnassus, any more than your mortal hills, to fix for ever on the barren top. No: it is some little dear retirement in the vale below that gives the right relish to the prospect, which, without that, is nothing but enchantment; and though pleasing for some time, at last leaves us in the desert. The great fat Doctor of Bath,* told me that poets should be kept poor, the more to animate their genius. This is like the cruel custom of putting a bird's eye out, that it may sing the sweeter; but, surely, they sing sweetest amidst the luxuriant woods, whilst the full spring blooms around them.

"Travelling has long been my fondest wish, for the very purpose you recommend. The storing one's imagination with ideas all-beautiful, all-great, and all-perfect nature: these are the true materia poetica, the light and colours, with which fancy kindles up her whole creation, paints a sentiment, and even embodies an abstracted thought. I long to see the fields where

* [Dr. Cheyne. There is an amusing reference to Cheyne, his talent, and his obesity, in one of Bolingbroke's printed letters.]

Virgil gathered his immortal honey, and tread the same ground where men have thought and acted so greatly.

"But not to travel entirely like a poet, I resolve not to neglect the more prosaic advantages of it, for it is no less my ambition to be capable of serving my country in an active than in a contemplative way. At my times of leisure abroad, I think of attempting another tragedy, and a story more addressed to common passions than 'Sophonisba.' The Sophonisba people now-a-days must have something like themselves, and a public spirited monster can never interest them. If anything could make me capable of an epic performance, it would be your favourable opinion, in thinking so. But (as you justly observe) that must be the work of years, and one must be in an epic situation to execute it. My heart both trembles with diffidence, and burns with ardour at the thought. The story of Timoleon is good as to the subject matter, but an author owes, I think, the scene of an epic action to his own country; besides, Timoleon admits of no machinery except that of the heathen gods, which will not do at this time of day. I hope, hereafter, to have the direction of your taste in these affairs; and in the meantime, will endeavour to expand those ideas and sentiments, and in some degree to gather up that knowledge which is necessary to such an undertaking.*

"Should the scenes and climates through which I pass inspire me with any poetry, it will naturally have recourse to you. But to hint a return from

* [Thomson commenced a play at the suggestion of Dr. Rundle on the Story of Socrates—but was persuaded to give it up by Mr. Pitt (afterwards Lord Chatham), by Mr. Lyttelton, and Gilbert West.]

Young or Stubbs* were a kind of poetical simony, especially when you yourself possess such a portion of the spirit."

"Rome, November 28, 1731.

"I WILL make no apology for neglecting to do myself the honour of writing to you since we left Paris. I may rather plead a merit in not troubling you with long scrawls of that travelling stuff, of which the world is full even to loathing. . . . . That enthusiasm which I had upon me, with regard to travelling, goes off, I find, very fast. One may imagine fine things in reading ancient authors; but to travel is to dissipate that vision. A great many antique statues, where several of the fair ideas of Greece are fixed for ever in marble, and the paintings of the first masters, are, indeed, most enchanting objects. How little, however, of these suffices! How unessential are they to life! they are, surely, not of that importance as to set the whole world, man, woman, and child, a-gadding. I should be sorry to be Goth enough to think them highly ornamental in life, when one can have them at home without paying for them an extravagant price. But for every one who can support it to make a trade of running abroad only to stare at them, I cannot help thinking something worse than a public folly. Instead of travelling so furiously, it were wiser and more public-spirited should they, with part of those sums of money spent that way, send persons of genius in architecture, painting, and sculpture, to study those arts abroad, and import them into England. Did they but once take root here, how they might flourish in such a generous and wealthy country! The nature of the great painter, architect, and statuary, is the same she ever was; and is no doubt as profuse

* [The Rev. George Stubbs, a now forgotten poet.]

of beauty, proportion, lovely forms, and real genius, as formerly she was to the sunny realms of Greece, did we but study the one and exert the other. In England, if we cannot reach the gracefully superfluous, yet I hope we shall never lose the substantial, necessary, and vital arts of life; such as depend on labour, liberty, and all commanding trade. For my part, I, who have no taste for smelling to an old musty stone, look upon these countries with an eye to poetry, in regard that the sisters reflect light and images to one another. Now I mention poetry, should you inquire after my Muse, all that I can answer is, that I believe she did not cross the channel with me. I know not whether your gardener at Eastbury has heard any thing of her among the woods there; she has not thought fit to visit me while I have been in this once poetic land, nor do I feel the least presage that she will. But not to lengthen out a letter that has no pretence to entertain you, give me leave only to add, that I can never lose the pleasing sense I have of your goodness to me; and it is a hope that I must flatter myself with your continuance of it upon my return to England; for which my veneration and love, I will be vain enough to say, increase every day, even to fondness and devotion. . . . . Lord Binning says that you are building a house in a very fine taste in London: there I am persuaded that we shall see not an uninhabitable whim of architecture, but an inhabitable house for the climate of England; where usefulness and convenience support beauty; and where beauty dignifies usefulness and convenience."

Thomson returned to England before the end of 1731. New scenes had rather excited than lessened his poetic ardour; and no sooner was he settled

than he resumed his pen, choosing for his subject "Liberty."

It has been erroneously supposed by every biographer of Thomson, that immediately on his return he obtained the sinecure situation of Secretary of Briefs in the Court of Chancery, and that soon after he had commenced his poem his young friend Mr. Talbot died. The slightest attention to dates will show the error of these statements. Sir Charles Talbot did not become Chancellor until the 29th of November, 1733, and Mr. Talbot died in September in that year; so that great part of "Liberty" must have been written before his decease, and he did not live to witness the service which his father rendered to Thomson by appointing him to the office alluded to. The truth then appears to be, that actuated either by gratitude to his patron, or by regard for his accomplished son, or probably by both feelings, the poet resolved to show his respect alike for the living and the dead, by prefixing to the first part of "Liberty" an address which should commemorate their worth. Mr. Talbot died in his twenty-fourth year, and Thomson's eulogy of him is marked by simplicity and tenderness.

In December, 1733, Aaron Hill sent Thomson his translation of Voltaire's "Zaire;" and the letter which contained his flattering comments on that performance, proves the correctness of the rumour that Thomson had exerted himself for the relief of poor old Dennis; who showed his gratitude by writing some verses on Thomson's kindness:*—

* Printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1733, p. 656. Dennis died on the 6th of January, 1734.

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Dear Sir, "Tuesday, December, 18, 1733.

"I HAVE been almost entirely in the country since I had the honour of yours, and of the inclosed papers you were so good as to send me. The two or three days since my return to town have been rather hurried than employed in soliciting for the benefit of old Dennis. Your well-known and formerly experienced goodness will, I hope, forgive me for having been so selfish as to keep your papers so long. Though I would have had some objections to your undertaking the translation of Zaire; now that it is so affectingly done, I should be very ungrateful, for the great pleasure it has given me, to think of them any more. In reading of Zara, I forget what it was that I objected to in Zaire. You have heightened it with more imagination, but such a chastised one, as accords perfectly well with the nobler fervency of the heart. The sentiments and reflections, too, rise in the translation, and glow stronger, as well as the touches of the poetical pencil. Allow me to say, that, in these respects, I deeply feel the difference betwixt Mr. Voltaire and Mr. Hill. The more generous warmth of your heart more animates the scene, raises the dear tumult in the breast, and moves me much more. I observed nothing that I wished altered but a word here and there, which are mere trifles, and not worth regard. One, however, I will take the liberty to mention: it is in a speech of the first scene, which marks the civility and gallantry of France—"Where men adore their wives." The two last words I would change into—the fair.—I imagine you smiling at my important criticism, and ready to reply—that though the present French are not famous for adoring their wives, yet those in the good old unrefined days of St.

Lewis might. If they do not now adore their wives, they perhaps do better, they make them easy. I shall long to renew the pleasure your play has given me at its representation. What attention I can contribute to the promoting of that, will greatly be its own reward. Mr. Dodington is expected, in a few days, from Ireland: he, I dare say, will warmly favour it, from a double cause—both the love of the fine arts, and his own pleasure. Had you but players equal to those Voltaire had, I would not doubt, in this instance, the taste of our countrymen—almighty nature is everywhere the same.

"Soon I propose to fix in Town for the winter, during which time I hope to pass several happy evenings in your company: Mr. Pope earnestly wishes the same. Believe me to be, most affectionately and sincerely, dear Sir, yours, &c.

"J. THOMSON."

The First Part of "Liberty" was published on the 27th of December, 1734; and the Second and Third Parts appeared in the following year.*

About this time Thomson's only brother, John, came to London, and acted as his amanuensis; but being attacked with consumption he returned to Scotland early in August, 1735. A letter which the poet wrote on that occasion to Dr. Cranston is of much interest, not only from the fraternal kindness which it displays, but from the account he gives of his pecuniary affairs and expectations:—

* "Ancient and Modern Italy compared, being the First Part of Liberty. A Poem by Mr. Thomson. London, 1735. 4to."—"Greece, being the Second Part of Liberty, &c. 4to. 1735."—"Rome, being the Third Part of Liberty, &c. 4to. 1735."

"Dear Sir, "London, August the 7th, 1735.

"THE bearer hereof, my brother, was seized last spring with a severe cold which seems to have fallen upon his lungs, and has reduced him to such a low condition that his physician here advises him to try what his native air can do, as the only remaining means of recovery. In his present melancholy circumstances, it gives me no small satisfaction to think that he will have the benefit of your directions: and for me to spend more words in recommending him to your care were, I flatter myself, a superfluous formality. Your old acquaintance Anderson attends him; and besides what is necessary to defray the expenses of their journey, I have only given my brother five guineas; choosing rather to remit him the money he will afterwards want, which shall be done upon the first notice.

"My brother's illness puts me in mind of that which afflicted you some years ago; and it is with the sincerest pleasure that I reflect on your recovery: your health I hope is perfectly established; health being the life of life. I will not make you the compliments which I justly could upon that subject; the sentiments of the heart are generally plain, and mine rejoices in your welfare.

"Should you inquire into my circumstances: They blossomed pretty well of late, the Chancellor having given me the office of Secretary of the Briefs under him: but the blight of an idle inquiry into the fees and offices of the courts of justice, which arose of late, seems to threaten its destruction. In that case I am made to hope amends: to be reduced, however, from enjoyment to hope, will be but an awkward affair—awkward or not, hope and I (I hope) shall never part. Hope is the breath in the nostrils of happiness, when

that goes this dies. But then one ought at the same time to distinguish betwixt the fair star of hope, and that meteor, court-expectation. With regard to the last, I subscribe to a new beatitude of Pope's or Swift's I think it is—Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.

"You will see by the three first parts of a poem called 'Liberty,' which I send you, that I still attempt the barren but delightful mountain of Parnassus. I have poured into it several of those ideas which I gathered in my travels and particularly from classic ground. It is to consist of two parts more, which I design to publish next winter. Not quite to tantalize you, I send you likewise some of the best things that have been printed here of late, among which Mr. Pope's second volume of Miscellanies is eminent: and in it his Essay on Man. The first volume of his Miscellany Poems was printed long ago, and is every where. His Letters were piratically printed by the infamous Curll. Though Mr. Pope be much concerned at their being printed, yet are they full of wit, humour, good sense, and what is best of all, a good heart. One Mr. Lyttelton, a young gentleman, and member of parliament, wrote the Persian Letters. They are reckoned prettily done. The book on the Sacrament is writ by Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester. All bigots roar against it, consequently it will work your Mass-Johns. I wish I could send you more entertainment of this kind: but a new gothic night seems to be approaching, the great year, the millenium of dulness. Believe me most affectionately yours,

"J. Thomson.

"Remember me kindly to friends, and direct to me, should you favour me with a letter, at the Lancaster Coffee House, Lancaster Court, in the Strand, London."

On the 23rd of August, Thomson again wrote to Aaron Hill, and commented freely on the low state of the theatrical art, and on the degraded condition of literature:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Dear Sir," "August 23, 1735.

"Upon my return to Town, from Mr. Dodington's seat in Dorsetshire, where I had for some time been, I found your letter, about a month after its date. Had it been sent me in the country, I could not have neglected, till now, acknowledging the pleasure it, and the packet of 'Prompters' you sent along with it, gave me. Though very happy in the company where I then was, yet cannot I help sincerely regretting the loss of that entertainment to which you was so good as to give me an invitation. With the greatest pleasure would I have beheld, and with the greatest zeal would I have countenanced, to the utmost of my little power, the revival of action, which seems on all our theatres to be now both dead and rotten. A friend of mine, who was there, did not, by what he told me, soften my loss.

"I was very much enlightened and warmed by the 'Prompters' upon action: they present no less a strong and beautiful idea of what actors ought to be, than a mortifying one of what they are. As the stage is a powerful school of human polite morality, so nothing can contribute more to barbarize the age than the present condition of ours. There, human nature is represented in as awkward, false, and monstrous a manner, as the human form was by an ancient Gothic sculpture and painting. If that were all, it might be laughed at, and contemned: but since it tends, at the same time, to confound the head, and corrupt the

heart; since crowds grow stupid, or barbarous, as they gaze; who can consider it in that view, without feeling an honest indignation? And what crowns the misfortune is, that there is no hope of its ever being otherwise: the root of the evil lies too deep to be plucked up. Was there ever an equal absurdity heard of, among a civilized people? That such an important public diversion, the school which forms the manners of the age, should be made the property of private persons; who, did they happen in the first instance, by an infinite chance, to be judges of the matter, yet may transfer that property to the most profligate, tasteless, and ignorant of mankind. But this, alas! is only one of the pillars of that vast temple of corruption, under which this generation, more than any other that ever boasted freedom, worships the dirty, low-minded, insatiable idol of self-interest. Even to this idol is every public work, which we have the soul to attempt, made an immediate sacrifice.—You see how much your 'Prompters' have inflamed me; and the melancholy conclusion I draw from all is, that I never hope to see gentlemen of equal genius, taste, judgment, and generosity of heart, to the author of these 'Prompters,' at the head of our theatres. I may, however, very well live to see all poetry reduced to magazine-miscellanies, all plays to mummery entertainments, and, in short, all learning absorbed into the sink of hireling scurrilous newspapers. Pardon this supposition in a letter to one, who, while he lives, will never suffer it wholly to take place: in the mean time, go on to stem the torrent of babarism. I wish you could find an assistant, though never so weak a one, in, dear Sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

Dr. Cranston informed Thomson of the death of

his brother, in a letter dated on the 23rd of September, and he replied to it in the following month. His reflections on death are well expressed, and he says that in his opinion a future state of happiness, consists in a progressive increase of beatitude. This letter is valuable also, because it contains some lines on the death of his young friend, Mr. Talbot, which were intended for insertion in "Liberty," instead of those which do occur:—

"Dear Sir, "London, October 20th, 1735.

"Being but lately returned from Mr. Dodington's seat, in Dorsetshire, I only received yours of September the 23rd, a few days ago. The account it brought me of my brother's death, I was pretty much prepared against, considering the almost hopeless condition he had for some time been in. What you mention is the true point of view wherein to place the death of relations and friends. They then are past our regret: the living are to be lamented, and not the dead. And this is so true and natural, that people when they grieve for the death of those they love, from a principle of compassion for the departed, without a return upon themselves, they envisage them in the article of death, and under the pains both real and imagined thereof; that is to say, they grieve for them whilst they were alive. Death is a limit which human passions ought not, but with great caution and reverence, to pass. Nor, indeed, can they easily pass that limit; since beyond it things are not clearly and distinctly enough perceived formally to excite them. This, I think, we may be sure of, that a future state must be better than this; and so on through the never-ceasing succession of future states; every one rising upon the last, an everlasting new display of infinite goodness.

But hereby hangs a system, not calculated perhaps for the meridian in which you live, though for that of your own mind, and too long to be explained in a letter. I will conclude these thoughts by giving you some lines of a copy of verses I wrote on my friend, Mr. Talbot's death, and designed at first to be prefixed to 'Liberty,' but afterwards reduced to those you see stand there. Perhaps sometime or other I may publish the whole.

'Be then the startling tear,
Or selfish, or mistaken, wiped away.
By death the good, from reptile matter raised,
And upward soaring to superior day,
With pity hear our plaints, with pity see
Our ignorance of tears; if e'er indeed,
Amid the woes of life, they quench their joys.
Why should we cloud a friend's exalted state
With idle grief, tenaciously prolonged
Beyond the lonely drops that frailty sheds,
Surprised? No, rather thence less fond of life,
Yet still the lot enjoying heaven allows,
Attend we, cheerful, the rejoining hour.
Children of nature! let us not reject,
Froward, the good we have for what we want.
Since all by turns must spread the sable sail,
Driven to the coast that never makes return,
But where we happy hope to meet again;
Sooner or later, a few anxious years,
Still fluttering on the wing, not much imports.
Eternal Goodness reigns: be this our stay;
A subject for the past of grateful song,
And for the future of undrooping hope.'

"Every thing, it seems, is a subject of contention in this interested world. Let his effects be all given to his cousin, Thomas Turnbull, who so kindly attended him in his illness. Only his great coat, jockey coat, I mean, may be given to David of Minto, since he, I hear, desires it. Very likely he took it amiss that my brother was not lodged with him, but my aunt of

Chesters I thought more proper to tend and soften his sickness, she being a very good tender-hearted woman. Let her son Thomas therefore have all his effects, except it be the aforesaid jockey coat. I shall be glad besides to render them all other service.

"Please to let me know to whom I shall pay what is due upon my brother's account. Your goodness on this occasion gives me no new sentiment of satisfaction; it is what I have been long acquainted with. If you would still add to your obligations, lay freely your commands upon me whenever I can be of any service to you. There are no news here. The King is expected this week. A battle likewise is by some expected; we hungered and thirsted after . . . . Seckendorff and Belle-Isle. But the French and Germans seem to have fought enough last campaign in Italy, to excuse them for this. The gallant French this year have made war upon the Germans, I beg their politeness's pardon, like vermin—eat them up. Hang them all. If they make war it is to rob, if peace to cheat one another. Such are the noble dispositions of mankind at present. But before I fall into a bad humour, I will take my leave of you, being always, my dear friend, your most affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON.

"Pray remember me kindly to all friends."

Thomson published the Fourth and Fifth Parts* of "Liberty" in 1736. Though the most laboured,

* "Britain, being the Fourth Part of Liberty, a Poem," &c. 4to. 1736.—"The Prospect, being the Fifth Part of Liberty," &c. 4to. 1736. ["Liberty" is in five Parts.—Of Part one Millar printed 3000 copies and 250 fine. Of Parts two and three he printed only 2000 copies and 250 fine; and of Parts four and five only 1000 copies and 250 fine. See Woodfall's Account Book in Notes and Queries, xi. 419.]

and in its author's opinion the best of his productions, "Liberty" was never popular; and perhaps most persons have found it as difficult to read to an end as Dr. Johnson did. It was inscribed to Frederick Prince of Wales, and probably enabled Mr. Lyttelton to introduce Thomson to the notice of his Royal Highness. However grieved at the coldness of the public towards his favourite work, one at least of his friends gave him every consolation that praise can afford. That exquisite flatterer, Aaron Hill, whose taste and judgment added zest to his eulogy, thus wrote to him, after receiving the First Part:—

"Dear Sir, "February 17, 1734.

"You have lately given me two pleasures; for one of them I am indebted to fortune, who brought me near you, though not quite near enough, the other night, at the playhouse. The second I owe to a hand, I am infinitely more proud to be obliged by; for I received your beautiful present of 'Liberty' from its author. It will be, in all senses, an ornament to my study. It will, also, be such to my heart and my memory; for I shall never be able to think of a loveliness in moral, a frankness in social, or a penetration in political life, to which you have not, in this inimitable masterpiece, both of language and genius, given a force, and a delicacy, which few shall be born with a capacity to feel, and none ever with a capacity to exceed.

"I do not know a pleasure I should enjoy with more pride than that of filling up the leisure of a well employed year, in exerting the critic, on your poem; in considering it first, with a view to the vastness of its conception, in the general plan; secondly, to the grandeur, the depth, the unleaning, self-supported

richness of the sentiments; and thirdly, to the strength, the elegance, the music, the comprehensive living energy, and close propriety of your expression. I look upon this mighty work as the last stretched blaze of our expiring genius. It is the dying effort of despairing and indignant virtue, and will stand, like one of those immortal pyramids, which carry their magnificence through times that wonder to see nothing round them but uncomfortable desert.

"Yet you must give me leave, while I but admire your genius, to love your soul, that has such compass of humanity, your poem is not newer than your mind, nor your expression stronger than your virtue. Whatever school-enthusiasm has misdreamt of Homer, that he knew all arts, and that his works have taught their practice, might be almost said and proved of Mr. Thomson's 'Liberty,' without partiality or flattery; whatever has been suffered, done, or thought, through all the revolutions of forgotten time, your more than magic muse revokes, reacts, and animates, till we become cotemporaries of every busy age, and see, and feel the changes, which they shone or sunk by.

"It is possible that this devoted nation, irrecoverably lost in luxury, may, like your

'——Little artist form,
On higher life intent, its silken tomb.'

It may rise to future animation, and, its wealth, its pride and commerce lost, lose also its corruption, and retriumph, in the strength of undesiring poverty. For, certainly, you have detected the sole root of every English evil you deplore so beautifully:

'Whenever puffed with power, and gorged with wealth,
Nations, like ours, let trade enormous rise,
And east and south their mingled treasure pour;
Then, swelled impetuous, the corrupting flood
Bursts o'er the city, and devours the land.'

"Think, seriously, upon this observation, and try if, in all your acquaintance with past ages, you can find a people long at once retaining public virtue and extended commerce. Search, too, as much in vain for one who is, with warmer truth, and better founded zeal, than I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"A. Hill."

In another letter, dated in the following January, Hill pointed out some slight defects in "Liberty;" and in September, 1735, after referring to a copy of "Zara," which he submitted for Thomson's perusal, he observed,

"The warmth you express against the corruption and degeneracy of our stage is an indignation both natural and necessary in a breast—

'The bounds of self divinely bursting!'

yet fain would I hope, it is not in the prophetic spirit of the character, that a poet, like you, asserts, 'The root of this evil is too deep to be plucked up.'"

Mr. Hill then approves, with the bitterness of a disappointed author, of the anathema which Thomson had pronounced against the dramatic taste of the time. On the same occasion he suggested the establishment of a Tragic Academy, and asked him if he thought the Prince of Wales would give his support to the plan:—a remark indicative of Thomson's being sufficiently connected with the Prince to be aware of his sentiments.

In 1736 Thomson was one of the committee of managers of the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, his colleagues being either persons of

high rank or of considerable literary reputation; and about May in that year he removed to Kew Lane, near Richmond, to which place he requested Mr. Hill to direct his next letter, which shows that, in consequence of the failure of "Liberty" as a speculation, he generously resolved to secure the publisher from loss:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Dear Sir, "May 11, 1736.

"It is far from being the want of a due sense of the honour, your two last letters did me, that has prevented my thanking you for them before now: the truth is, they plunged me so deep into your debt, that I was dispirited, through mere despair, of clearing it. But now I am rather willing to declare myself an irrecoverable bankrupt, than any longer neglect to acknowledge the refined pleasure which your generous approbation of my late performance gives me. I call it generous, that epithet having a peculiar relation to whatever you do; besides, I cannot help being afraid that it must, in a great measure, proceed from so humane a cause. In the mean time, however that be, I will avow, that I am justly proud of, charmed with, and most agreeably rewarded by, your good opinion of my poem. Allow me here, by-the-bye, to remark, that though poets have been long used to this truly spiritual and almost only emolument arising from their works; yet I doubt much, if booksellers have any manner of relish for it: I think, therefore, (notwithstanding that the ghosts of many authors walk unrevenged), of annulling the bargain I made with mine, who would else be a considerable loser, by the paper, printing, and publication, of 'Liberty.' As I shall, in this case, be possessed of the entire property of it

again, I propose, in a year or two hence, to give a new edition of it; and beg that you would, ere then, enrich me with some criticisms, which I hope I shall have the grace to relish as well as praises.

"Your observations, with regard to political corruption, like natural, when come to a crisis, producing more exalted scenes of animation, is fine, and pleases by the future prospect it opens; but it awakens, at the same time, a sentiment no less mortifying, should we find our lot cast in the times of putrefaction; should we find ourselves devoted, in an anti-heroic manner, for the good of posterity. I wish, heartily, that I could refute what you likewise observe with regard to the cause of this corruption. Certainly the kind exchanger of the superabundance for the sweets and elegancies of life, is itself corrupted, and its gifts abused, from the want of taste: for whence is it, save the want of taste, that the continual tides of riches, poured in upon this nation by commerce, have been lost again in a gulph of ungraceful, inelegant, inglorious luxury? But whence, you will say, this want of taste? Whence this sordid turn to cautious time-serving, money-making, sneaking prudence, instead of regardless, unfettered virtue? To private jobs, instead of public works? To profitable, instead of fine arts? To gain, instead of glory? In a word, to the whole venal system of modern administration? And to those gross perishing luxuries, that reconcile, at once, avarice and profusion, centering all in self, and even in the meanest, the material part of self. This disquisition, I am afraid, would very near lead me back again to your observation. It must be owned, however, that the better genius of this nation has often nobly exerted itself, and will struggle hard before it expire. With regard to arts and learning, one may venture to say,

that they might yet stand their ground, were they but merely protected. In lieu of all patrons that have been, are, or will be, in England, I wish we had one good act of parliament for securing to authors the property of their own works; and that the stage were put upon the footing of common sense and humanity. And can it be, that those who impress paper with what constitutes the best and everlasting riches of all civilized nations, and of all ages, should have less property in the paper, so enriched, than those who deal in the rags, which make that paper? Can it be, that the great, the delightful school of manners, should be abandoned to common sale, and become the property of any one, who can purchase it, to be, perhaps, the school of folly, and corruption?—A simony this, in virtue; which, if not so wicked, yet is as pernicious as that in religion. What would Athenians have said to this! what laughter, what contempt, what indignation, would it have raised among them!

"Now that I mention the stage, I must still insist upon my copy of that only humane new entertainment I have seen upon it of late. I know not what gothic devil possessed the maid at my lodgings, but my few books must not be so robbed of the honour of boasting Zara among them from its author. Having been tantalized lately by seeing you at a distance, I wish you would be so good as to make me amends some evening, and let me know of it a few days before. Mr. Pope was the other day enquiring kindly after you: I should be glad we could, at the same time engage him. Poor Mr. Savage would be happy to pass an evening with you; his heart burns towards you with the eternal fire of gratitude: but how to find him, requires more intelligence than is allotted to mortals. Life is too short to lose years without the conversation of those

one most loves, and esteems; one of which number you must ever be to, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON.

"P.S. Please to direct to me in Kew Lane, Richmond, Surrey; and order your letter to be put into the General Post."

Hill replies to this letter:—

"One of the natural growths of such a mind, as we see in your writings, is the generosity of your purpose, in favour of the bookseller. I am in love with the humanity that inspired such a sentiment; but, for the sake of my country, wish it may never be carried into execution, because the beauty of the action would, of necessity, prevent its ever being forgotten; and a kind of national infamy, which must disgrace us to posterity, will, as infallibly, be a consequence of its being remembered. I confess myself sincerely mortified to hear that such a poem as 'Liberty,' in such a nation as Great Britain, can have failed to make a bookseller as rich as an ungrateful people have been made by its invaluable fund of manly sentiments; but there are dispositions, in political as well as natural bodies, which have prevalence to help or hinder the effect of medicines: and I am apprehensive, that republican improvements upon monarchical foundations will but spoil two different orders, either of which, alone, might have had strength and gracefulness."

He then proceeds to comply with Thomson's request, by sending him his criticisms in the event of a second edition; and alluding to his complaint of the want of protection for literary property, Hill says,—

"Would to God you were in the right, in that part of your letter which wishes, in lieu of state patronage, in favour of learning, that we had only some good act of parliament for securing to authors the property of their own works. Methinks if the act would go deep enough to reach the very root of your wish, it should, also, secure to the public the education of her gentlemen as well as the property of her writers; since, where the first are unable to taste, the last must write to no purpose. . . . . .

"I am pleased to hear that Mr. Pope was so kind as to make any inquiries concerning me. Your good nature was justly and generously employed in the mention you make of poor Mr. Savage."

The annexed, which is Thomson's last letter to Mr. Hill, alludes apparently to the Part of "Liberty," which was published in 1735:—

TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

"Dear Sir, "Friday Morning.

"I AM sorry that my present hurry cannot allow me time to answer your kind and excellent letter, in the manner it deserves. The freedom of your criticism I love, and am more proud of your approbation than it becomes me to say: in one the taste of fame is not more delicious than that of friendship in the other. You, in the last paragraph of your letter, prescribe me a glorious task; to perform which, would demand the same elegant and powerful pen, that prescribed it. Only to attempt it is my ambition. Please to accept of the Second Part of my Poem, and believe me to be, with the most affectionate esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"JAMES THOMSON."

A letter which the Poet wrote to his friend Mr. Ross about this period shows the affection he felt for his relations, and his readiness to contribute to their support. The tragedy to which he alludes was "Agamemnon:"—

"Dear Ross, "London, November 6, 1736.

"I own I have a good deal of assurance, after asking one favour of you, never to answer your letter till I ask another. But not to mince the matter more to a friend, and all apologies apart, hearken to my request. My sisters have been advised by their friends to set up at Edinburgh a little milliner's shop; and if you can conveniently advance to them twelve pounds, on my account, it will be a particular favour. That will set them a-going, and I design from time to time to send them goods from hence. My whole account I will pay you when you come up here, not in poetical paper credit, but in the solid money of this dirty world. I will not draw upon you, in case you be not prepared to defend yourself; but if your purse be valiant, please to inquire for Jean or Elizabeth Thomson, at the Reverend Mr. Gusthart's; and if this letter be not sufficient testimony of the debt, I will send you whatever you shall desire.

"It is late, and I would not lose this post. Like a laconic man of business, therefore, I must here stop short; though I have several things to impart to you, and, through your canal, to the dearest, truest, heartiest youth that treads on Scottish ground. The next letter I write you shall be washed clean from business in the Castalian fountain.

"I am whipping and spurring to finish a tragedy for you this winter, but am still at some distance from the goal, which makes me fear, being distanced.

Remember me to all friends, and above them all heartily to Mr. Forbes.* Though my affection to him is not fanned by letters, yet it is as high as when I was his brother in the virtu, and played at chess with him in a post-chaise. I am, dear Ross, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

"JAMES THOMSON."

On the 12th of the following January, he again wrote to Ross:—

"Dear Sir, "London, January 12, 1737.

"HAVING been entirely in the country of late, finishing my play, I did not receive yours till some days ago. It was kind in you not to draw rashly upon me, which at present had put me into danger; but very soon, that is to say about two months hence, I shall have a golden buckler, and you may draw boldly. My play is received in Drury Lane playhouse; and will be put into my Lord Chamberlain's or his deputy's hands to-morrow. May we hope to see you this winter, and to have the assistance of your hands in case it is asked? What will become of you if you don't come up? I am afraid the *Creepy* and you will become acquainted. Forbes, I hope, is cheerful, and in good health. Shall we soon see him? or shall I go to him before he comes to us? I long to see him in order to play out that game of chess which we left unfinished. Remember me kindly to him with all the zealous truth of old friendship. Pettie† came here two or three days ago; I have not yet seen the round man of God to be. He is to be parsonified a few days

* [John Forbes, "the Joyous Youth," of the "Castle of Indolence"—only son of Lord President Forbes.]

† Dr. Patrick Murdoch, the "oily man of God" of the "Castle of Indolence," and one of Thomson's biographers and editors.

hence. How a gown and cassock will become him; and with what a holy leer he will edify the devout females! There is no doubt of his having a call, for he is immediately to enter upon a tolerable living. God grant him more, and as fat as himself. It rejoices me to see one worthy, honest, excellent man raised, at least, to any independency. Pray make my compliments to my Lord President,* and all friends. I shall be glad to hear more at large from you. Just now I am with the Alderman, who wishes you all happiness, and desires his services to Joe. Believe me to be ever most affectionately yours,

"JAMES THOMSON."

His sisters and his forthcoming tragedy appear still to have divided his thoughts, for in February he thus wrote about both to Mr. Gavin Hamilton:

"I lately heard from my sisters at Edinburgh, that you were so good as to promise to advance to them, on my account, a trifle of money, which I proposed to allow them yearly. The sum is sixteen pounds sterling, and which I would have paid them eight pounds sterling at Martinmas, and the other eight pounds at Whitsuntide, the payment to begin from last Martinmas. So that the first year will be completed at Whitsunday next. Your doing this I shall look upon as a particular favour, and the money shall be paid here at your order as you please to direct. Please, upon receipt of this, to send to them at Mr. Gusthart's, and to advance to them the payment for last Martinmas, which place to my account. Had I had time this post, I would have written to them to wait upon you. I have a tragedy, entitled 'Agamemnon,' to be represented here about three weeks hence. Please

* Duncan Forbes.

to let me know how many copies I shall send to you, and you shall have them in full time. I have some thoughts of printing it for myself, but if I do not, I will take care you shall have what copies of it you demand. If I can serve you in any thing else here, I shall be very glad."

Thomson's next work originated in gratitude. His constant patron, Lord Chancellor Talbot, died in February, 1737, and in June the beautiful poem to his memory appeared.* Pieces of this nature, however creditable to the feelings which inspired them, must possess extraordinary intrinsic merit to create interest, when all remembrance of the individuals whom they celebrate has passed away. This merit is however possessed by the article in question; and the reader who turns from the cold and formal, though elegant versification of "Liberty," if he commence the tribute to Lord Talbot, will be induced to go on; and should he not think himself repaid by any other passage, he will be amply gratified by the description of the delicate species of patronage which it is fit for wealth and greatness to bestow.

The opportunity was also taken to defend Bishop Rundle, his early patron and the confidential friend of the Chancellor, who had incurred the suspicion of heresy; and it is not too much to say, that while this piece does honour to the virtues of its author's heart, it elevates his character as a poet.

His motive for perpetuating the fame of Lord

* [Of Thomson's poem on Lord Talbot's death, Millar printed 1000 copies and 156 fine.—See Woodfall's Account Book in Notes and Queries, xi. p. 419.]

Talbot was wholly disinterested. With the Chancellor he lost the situation which had rendered him independent; and though Lord Hardwicke, Talbot's successor, is stated to have kept the office open in expectation that he would apply for it, he failed to do so, and it was given to another. From what cause this neglect of his interest arose must be left to conjecture. It is said that he was listless and indifferent: but he may perhaps have fancied that his eminence was sufficiently great to have induced the new Chancellor to offer what his lordship imagined would have been sought; and he was possibly deprived of the office from a mistaken pride on both sides. The Poet might, however, without meanness, have asked to retain what he already possessed; and the new Chancellor might have had the urbanity to offer to continue that which it was ungenerous to take away; but he who, trusting to the merits of his works, suffers himself to believe that they will procure him that courtesy from rank which in England is reserved for the possessor of birth, wealth, and political influence, will find himself fatally mistaken, and will, like Thomson, have cause to deplore his error.

The change in his condition did not however impair his energies, or depress his spirits, nor did he alter his manner of living, trusting probably to the sale of his writings to supply his wants. The loss of his situation as Secretary of Briefs renders it probable that it was about this period that he was arrested for debt, and was rescued from a spunging house by Quin, the well known actor. The anecdote is highly creditable to both parties,

and is deserving of being recorded, as the origin of a friendship between two distinguished persons, which ended only with their lives.

On learning that Thomson was confined for a debt of about seventy pounds, Quin repaired to the house, and was introduced to him. Thomson was a good deal disconcerted at seeing Quin in such a place, and his embarrassment increased when Quin told him he was come to sup with him, being conscious that all the money he possessed would scarcely procure a good meal, and that credit was out of the question. His anxiety was however removed upon Quin's informing him that, as he supposed it would have been inconvenient to have had the supper dressed in the place they were in, he had ordered it from an adjacent tavern, and as a prelude half-a-dozen of claret was introduced. Supper being over, Quin said, "It is time now, Jemmy Thomson, we should balance accounts." This not a little astonished the Poet, who imagined he had some demand upon him; but Quin, perceiving it, continued, "Sir, the pleasure I have had in perusing your works, I cannot estimate at less than a hundred pounds, and I insist upon taking this opportunity of acquitting myself of the debt." On saying this, he put down a note of that value, and hastily took his leave, without waiting for a reply.

The most valuable acquaintance that Thomson ever formed was with Mr., afterwards the celebrated Lord Lyttelton, whom Pope has described as being

"Still true to virtue and as warm as true,"

but the precise time or manner of its commence-

ment is no where mentioned. Murdoch says Mr. Lyttelton presented him to the Prince of Wales before he was himself personally known to him; and Johnson states that this occurred after he lost his situation of Secretary of Briefs, which was early in 1737. On being introduced, his Royal Highness inquired into the state of his affairs, and Thomson having answered that "they were in a more poetical posture than formerly," the Prince granted him a pension of 100*l.* a year, but of which he was afterwards deprived.*

Pope's letters to Mr. Hill contain several allusions to Thomson's Tragedy of "Agamemnon." On the 8th of December, 1738,† he says, "I have been confirmed by Mr. Thomson as to the retardment of his play, of which he has written but two acts. . . . . I have never once been able to see Mr. Thomson in person; when I do, and it shall be soon, he shall know how much he is obliged to you for that plan of an alteration of his Tragedy, which is too good for me with any honesty to put upon him as my own." On the 12th of February, 1739, Pope wrote again to Hill:—"Mr. Thomson, after many shameful tricks from the manager [of Drury Lane], is determined to act his play at the other Theatre [Covent Garden], where the advantage lies

* [In 1737 (September) he published "An Ode to the Prince of Wales," on the birth of his first child—not on the birth of his son afterwards King George III, as stated by Mr. Bell in his edition of Thomson's Poems, vol. i. p. 207. Let me add here that the lines to Dr. Delacour (Bell, i. 226) are not by Thomson;—Cave disowned them for Thomson in the Gentleman's Magazine, and in Thomson's lifetime.]

† [As "Agamemnon" was produced at Drury Lane 6th of April, 1738, Pope must refer to another play.]

as to the women, and the success of his will depend upon them. I heartily wish you would follow his example that we might not be deprived of 'Cæsar.' I have yet seen but three acts of Mr. Thomson's, but I am told, and believe by what I have seen, that it excels in the pathetic."

The reception (6th of April, 1738) of "Agamemnon" was far from favourable; and a ludicrous story is told of Thomson's agony at witnessing the representation on the first night, being so great, as to oblige him to excuse his delay in meeting the friends with whom he had promised to sup, saying that his wig had been so disordered by perspiration that he could not appear until he had submitted to the hands of the hair-dresser. It is said, too, that such was his excitement upon the occasion, that he audibly accompanied the actors in their recitation, until a friend reminded him of the indiscretion. Pope was present at its appearance, and was honoured by the audience with a general clap. "Agamemnon" was inscribed to the Princess of Wales, in a dedication which is good because it is short, and because it is free from the fulsome panegyrics common to such addresses.* The prologue was furnished by Mallet; the epilogue (which from not being assigned to any other author, may in its present form be considered Thomson's own) is remarkable for having been altered after the first representation; and in all the editions of the play a note occurs, stating that the whole, except the six

* [Of Thomson's "Agamemnon" Millar printed 3000 copies and 100 fine. The second edition of 1500 copies appeared the same month.—See Notes and Queries, xi. 419.]

lines with which it commences, "being very justly disliked by the audience, another was substituted in its place."* It is doubtful if the original epilogue was written by him, and it would seem from the substituted lines, that those which gave place to it were offensive from their indelicacy. With much tact he hailed their rejection as an indication of a better taste:—

> "Thus he began:—and you approve the strain;
> Till the next couplet sunk to light and vain.
> You check'd him there.—To you, to reason just,
> He owns he triumph'd in your kind disgust.
> Charm'd by your frown, by your displeasure graced,
> He hails the rising virtue of your taste."

Shortly before "Agamemnon" was produced, Dr. Rundle thus wrote to Mrs. Sandys, whence it appears that that lady had suggested to Thomson a subject for a play, and which he once intended to adopt:—

"My friend Thomson, the poet, is bringing another untoward heroine on the stage, and has deferred writing on the subject you chose for him, though he had the whole scheme drawn out into acts and scenes, proper turns of passion and sentiments pointed out to him, and the distress made as touching and important, as new, and interesting, and regular, as any that was ever introduced on the stage at Athens, for the instruction of that polite nation. But, perhaps the delicacy of the subject, and the judgment required in saying bold truths, whose boldness should not make

* [Thomson was unfortunate too with Mallet's Prologue. The concluding part of which the licenser would not allow to be spoken. The prohibited lines are printed between inverted commas.]

them degenerate into offensiveness, deterred him. His present story is the death of Agamemnon. An adulteress, who murders her husband, is but an odd example to be presented before, and admonish the beauties of Great Britain. However, if he will be advised, it shall not be a shocking, though it cannot be a noble story. He will enrich it with a profusion of worthy sentiments and high poetry, but it will be written in a rough, harsh style, and in numbers great, but careless. He wants that neatness and simplicity of diction which is so natural in dialogue. He cannot throw the light of an elegant ease on his thoughts, which will make the sublimest turns of art appear the genuine unpremeditated dictates of the heart of the speaker. But with all his faults, he will have a thousand masterly strokes of a great genius seen in all he writes; and he will be applauded by those who most censure him."

In 1739, his tragedy entitled "Edward and Eleanora" was offered to the stage, but its representation was prohibited. To understand this circumstance, it is necessary to allude to the politics of the period. The heir apparent, Frederick Prince of Wales, lived in open hostility to his father George the Second; his house was the rendezvous of the opposition; and as the advocate of liberal opinions he was the idol of the whigs and other discontented persons. The plot of "Edward and Eleanora" is derived from the well-known but apocryphal story of Eleanor of Castile, the wife of Prince Edward, afterwards King Edward the First, having preserved her husband's life in the Holy Land by sucking poison from his wound. As Edward was

then heir apparent to the crown, he stood in the same position as the Prince of Wales; and Thomson availed himself of the circumstance to introduce allusions calculated to strengthen the Prince's popularity by encouraging the people to hope for his accession. Of these the most striking are:—

"Edward, return; lose not a day, an hour,
Before this city. Though your cause be holy,
Believe me, 'tis a much more pious office,
To save your father's old and broken years,
His mild and easy temper, from the snares
Of low, corrupt, insinuating traitors:
A nobler office far! on the firm base
Of well proportion'd liberty, to build
The common quiet, happiness, and glory
Of King and people, England's rising grandeur.
To you, my Prince, this task, of right, belongs.
Has not the Royal heir a juster claim
To share his father's inmost heart and counsels,
Than aliens to his interest, those, who make
A property, a market of his honour?"

"Edward has great, has amiable virtues;
That virtue chiefly which befits a Prince—
He loves the people he must one day rule;
With fondness loves them, with a noble pride;
Esteems their good, esteems their glory his."

"Amidst his many virtues, youthful Edward
Is lofty, warm, and absolute of temper;
I therefore seek to moderate his heat,
To guide his fiery virtues, that, misled
By dazzling power and flattering sycophants,
Might finish what his father's weaker measures
Have tried in vain. And hence I here attend him.
O save our country, Edward! save a nation,
The chosen land, the last retreat of freedom,
Amidst a world enslaved!—Cast back thy view,
And trace from farthest times her old renown:
Think of the blood that, to maintain her rights,
And guard her sheltering laws, has flow'd in battle,

Or on the patriot's scaffold: think what cares,
What vigilance, what toils, what bright contention,
In councils, camps, and well-disputed senates,
It cost our generous ancestors, to raise
A matchless plan of freedom: whence we shine,
Even in the jealous eye of hostile nations,
The happiest of mankind.—Then see all this,
This virtue, wisdom, toil, and blood of ages,
Behold it ready to be lost for ever.
In this important, this decisive hour,
On thee, and thee alone, our weeping country
Turns her distressful eye; to thee she calls,
And with a helpless parent's piercing voice."

Edward is made to say, in reply,

"O, there is nothing, which for thee, my country,
I, in my proper person, could not suffer!"

Many other political allusions occur, which it was impossible not to understand; hence the suppression of the piece was neither surprising nor unreasonable.* The remark of Johnson that it was difficult to discover why the play was not allowed to be acted, proves that he never read Thomson's works with the attention which was incumbent upon his biographer. It was, however, printed with

* Murdoch says, "This refusal drew after it another; and in a way which, as it is related, was rather ludicrous. Mr. Paterson, a companion of Mr. Thomson, afterwards his deputy and then his successor in the general-surveyorship, used to write out fair copies for his friend, when such were wanted for the press or for the stage. This gentleman likewise courted the tragic muse; and had taken for his subject the story of Arminius the German hero. But his play, guiltless as it was, being presented for a license, no sooner had the censor cast his eyes on the hand-writing in which he had seen 'Edward and Eleanora,' than he cried out, 'Away with it!' and the author's profits were reduced to what his bookseller could afford for a tragedy in distress."

a dedication to the Princess of Wales, the moderation of which is its chief merit. He says,

"In the character of Eleanora I have endeavoured to represent, however faintly, a Princess distinguished for all the virtues that render greatness amiable. I have aimed, particularly, to do justice to her inviolable affection and generous tenderness for a Prince, who was the darling of a great and free people. Their descendants, even now, will own with pleasure how properly this address is made to your Royal Highness."

The loss of whatever fame and profit he might have anticipated in consequence of the prohibition of his Tragedy, was more than made up by the sympathy of the public. To the public he appeared in a light which never fails to render an Englishman attractive, that of a patriot suffering for the sake of freedom. Johnson states that he endeavoured to repair his pecuniary loss by a subscription, but he says that he cannot tell its success. Upon the same authority it is related, that "when the public murmured at the unkind treatment of Thomson, one of the Ministerial writers remarked, that he had taken a *Liberty* which was not agreeable to *Britannia* in any *Season*."

In 1740 an edition of Milton's Areopagitica was published, to which Thomson wrote a spirited preface. From this time until 1745 he did little besides writing his "Masque of Alfred," in conjunction with his friend Mallet. It was composed by command of the Prince of Wales for the entertainment of his household at his summer residence, and was performed in the gardens at Clifden on

the 1st of August, 1740, before a brilliant audience, consisting of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales and their whole suite. This piece, which contained "Rule Britannia," was some years after acted at Covent Garden, with alterations and new music.*

Three letters which Thomson wrote in the year 1742, when he was residing in Kew Lane, have been printed. Two of them are addressed to Mrs. Robertson, the sister of Miss Young, to whom he was warmly attached, and whose beauty and merits he repeatedly celebrated under the name of Amanda. Those ladies had gone to Bath for their health, and Thomson laments the loss of their society in a lively style:—

"I cannot help telling you of a very pleasing scene I lately saw. In the middle of a green field there stands a peaceful lowly habitation; into which having entered, I beheld innocence, sweet innocence, asleep. Your heart would have yearned, your eyes perhaps overflowed with tears of joy, to see how charming he looked; like a young cherub dropped from heaven, if they be so happy as to have *young* cherubs there.

"When awaked, it is not to be imagined with what complacency and ease, what *soft* serenity altogether unmixed with the least cloud, he opened his eyes. Dancing with joy in his nurse's arms, his eyes not only smiled, but laughed, which put me in mind of a

* It was entirely new modelled by Mallet, no part of the original being retained except a few lines, and was acted at Drury Lane, and published in 8vo. in 1751. Mr. Bolton Corney ascribes "'Rule Britannia,' on no slight evidence, to Mallet." On a point of so much interest, the evidence should assuredly have been stated.

certain near relation of his, whom I need not name. What delights thee so, thou lovely babe? art thou thinking of thy mother's recovery? does some kind power impress upon thee a presage of thy future happiness under her tender care?—I took the liberty to touch him with unhallowed lips, which restored me to the good opinion of the nurse, who had neither forgot nor forgiven my having slighted that favour once."

Another letter is here given at length, from its being the only attempt of a humorous nature in prose which Thomson is known to have made:—

"TO A FRIEND, ON HIS TRAVELS.

"Trusty and well beloved Dog, "December 7, 1742.

"HEARING you are gone abroad to see the world, as they call it, I cannot forbear, upon this occasion, transmitting you a few thoughts.

"It may seem presumption in me to pretend to give you any instruction; but you must know, that I am a dog of considerable experience. Indeed I have not improved so much as I might have done by my justly deserved misfortunes: the case very often of my betters. However, a little I have learned; and sometimes, while I seemed to lie asleep before the fire, I have overheard the conversation of your travellers. In the first place, I will not suppose that you are gone abroad an illiterate cub, just escaped from the lash of your keeper, and running wild about the world like a dog who has lost his master, ut'erly unacquainted with the proper knowledge, manners, and conversation of dogs.

"These are the public jests of every country through which they run post, and frequently they are avoided

as if they were mad dogs. None will converse with them but those who shear, sometimes even skin them, and often they return home like a dog who has lost his tail. In short, these travelling puppies do nothing else but run after foreign bitches, learn to dance, cut capers, play tricks, and admire your fine outlandish howling; though, in my opinion, our vigorous deep mouthed British note is better music. If a timely stop is not put to this, the genuine breed of our ancient sturdy dogs will by degrees dwindle and degenerate into dull Dutch mastiffs, effeminate Italian lapdogs, or tawdry impertinent French harlequins. All our once noble throated guardians of the house and fold will be succeeded by a mean courtly race, that snarl at honest men, flatter rogues, proudly wear badges of slavery, ribands, collars, &c. and fetch and carry sticks at the lion's court. By the by, my dear Marquis, this fetching and carrying of sticks is a diversion you are too much addicted to, and, though a diversion, unbecoming a true independent country dog. There is another dog vice that greatly prevails among the hungry whelps at court, but you are too well stuffed to fall into that. What I mean is patting, pawing, soliciting, teasing, snapping the morsel out of one another's mouths, being bitterly envious, and insatiably ravenous, nay, sometimes filching when they safely may. Of this vice I have an instance continually before my eyes, in that wretched animal Scrub, whose genius is quite misplaced here in the country. He has, besides, such an admirable talent at scratching at a door, as might well recommend him to the office of a court waiter. A word in your ear—I wish a certain two-legged friend of mine had a little of his assiduity. These canine courtiers are also extremely given to bark at merit and virtue, if ill clad and poor:

they have likewise a nice discernment with regard to those whom their master distinguishes; to such you shall see them go up immediately, and fawning in the most abject manner—*baiser leur cul.* For me, it is always a maxim

> 'To honour humble worth; and scorning state,
> P— on the proud inhospitable gate.'

For which reason I go scattering my water every where about Richmond. And now that I am upon this topic, I must cite you two lines of a letter from Bounce, of celebrated memory, to Fop, a dog in the country to a dog at court. She is giving an account of her generous offspring, among which she mentions two, far above the vice I now censure:

> 'One ushers friends to Bathurst's door,
> One fawns at Oxford's on the poor.'

Charming dogs! I have little more to say; but only, considering the great mart of scandal you are at, to warn you against flattering those you converse with, and the moment they turn to go away, backbiting them—a vice with which the dogs of old ladies are much infected; and you must have been most furiously affected with it here at Richmond, had you not happened into a good family; therefore I might have spared this caution. One thing I had almost forgot. You have a base custom, when you chance upon a certain fragrant exuvium, of perfuming your carcass with it. Fie! fie! leave that nasty custom to your little, foppish, crop-eared dogs, who do it to conceal their own stink.

"My letter, I fear, grows tedious. I will detain you from your slumbers no longer, but conclude by wishing that the waters and exercise may bring down your fat sides, and that you may return a genteel

accomplished dog. Pray lick for me, you happy dog you, the hands of the fair ladies you have the honour to attend. I remember to have had that happiness once, when one who shall be nameless looked with an envious eye upon me.

"Farewell, my dear Marquis. Return, I beg it of you, soon to Richmond; when I will treat you with some choice fragments, a marrow-bone, which I will crack for you myself, and a dessert of high toasted cheese. I am, without further ceremony, yours sincerely,

"BUFF."

"Mi Dewti to Marki. X, Scrub's mark."

In a letter which Thomson wrote to Mr. Lyttelton, in July, 1743, he says he was employed in correcting "The Seasons." At that time he had never seen Hagley, his friend's seat, in Worcestershire:—

"Dear Sir, "London, July 14, 1743.

"I HAVE the pleasure of yours some posts ago, and have delayed answering it hitherto that I might be able to determine when I could have the happiness of waiting upon you. Hagley is the place in England I most desire to see; I imagine it to be greatly delightful in itself, and I know it be so to the highest degree by the company it is animated with. Some reasons prevent my waiting upon you immediately, but, if you will be so good as let me know how long you design to stay in the country, nothing shall hinder me from passing three weeks or a month with you before you leave it. As this will fall in Autumn I shall like it the better, for I think that season of the year the most pleasing and the most poetical. The spirits are not

then dissipated with the gaiety of Spring, and the glaring light of Summer, but composed into a serious and tempered joy. The year is perfect. In the mean time I will go on with correcting 'The Seasons,' and hope to carry down more than one of them with me. The Muses, whom you obligingly say I shall bring along with me, I shall find with you—the muses of the great simple country, not the little, fine-lady muses of Richmond Hill.

"I have lived so long in the noise, or at least its distant din of the town, that I begin to forget what retirement is: with you I shall enjoy it in its highest elegance, and purest simplicity. The mind will not only be soothed into peace, but enlivened into harmony. My compliments attend all at Hagley, and particularly her* who gives it charms to you it never had before.

"Believe me to be ever with the greatest respect,
"Most affectionately yours,
"JAMES THOMSON."

In August Thomson visited Mr. Lyttelton at Hagley, and from thence wrote a letter to Miss Young, which shows that he was warmly attached to her:—

TO MISS YOUNG.

"Hagley, August 29, 1743.

"AFTER a disagreeable stage-coach journey, disagreeable in itself, and infinitely so as it carried me from you, I am come to the most agreeable place and company in the world. The park, where we pass a great part of our time, is thoroughly delightful, quite

* Lucy, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, esq Mr. Lyttelton's first wife, whom he married in June, 1742.

enchanting. It consists of several little hills, finely tufted with wood, and rising softly one above another; from which are seen a great variety of at once beautiful and grand extensive prospects: but I am most charmed with its sweet embowered retirements, and particularly with a winding dale that runs through the middle of it. This dale is overhung with deep woods, and enlivened by a stream, that, now gushing from mossy rocks, now falling in cascades, and now spreading into a calm length of water, forms the most natural and pleasing scene imaginable. At the source of this water, composed of some pretty rills, that purl from beneath the roots of oaks, there is as fine a retired seat, as lover's heart could wish. There I often sit, and with a dear exquisite mixture of pleasure and pain of all that love can boast of excellent and tender, think of you. But what do I talk of sitting and thinking of you there? wherever I am, and however employed, I never cease to think of my loveliest Miss Young. You are part of my being; you mix with all my thoughts, even the most studious, and instead of disturbing give them greater harmony and spirit. Ah tell me, do I not now and then steal a tender thought from you? I may claim that distinction from the merit of my love. Yes I love you to that degree as must inspire into the coldest breast a mutual passion. So look to your heart, for you will scarce be able to defend it against my tenderness. Nor is the society here inferior to the scene. It is gentle, animated, pleasing. Nothing passes but what either tends to amuse the imagination, improve the head, or better the heart. This is the truly happy life, the union of retirement and choice society; it gives an idea of that which the patriarchal or golden age is supposed to have been; when every family was a little

state of itself, governed by the mild laws of reason, benevolence and love. Don't however imagine me so madly rural as not to think those who have the powers of happiness in their own minds happy every where. The mind is its own place the genuine source of its own happiness; and, amidst all my raptures with regard to the country, I would rather live in the most London corner of London with you, than in the finest country retirement, and that too enlivened by the best society, without you. You so fill my mind with all ideas of beauty, so satisfy my soul with the purest and most sincere delight, I should feel the want of little else. Yet still the country life with you, diversified now and then by the contrast of the town, is the wish of my heart. May heaven grant me that favourite happiness, and I shall be the happiest of men, and so much the happier as the possession of you will excite me to deserve my happiness, by whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy.

"Let me now, my dearest Miss Young, bespeak your goodness. I shall soon, I am afraid, have occasion for all your friendship; and I would fain flatter myself that you will generously in my absence speak of me more than you ever owned to me. If I am so happy as to have your heart, I know you have spirit to maintain your choice; and it shall be the most earnest study and purpose of my life not only to justify but to do you credit by it. Believe me, though happy here as the most beautiful scenes of nature, elegant society and friendship can make me, I languish to see you, and to draw every thing that is good and amiable from your lovely eyes. Without you there is a blank in my happiness, which nothing else can fill up. I will not be so extravagant as to hope to hear from you, but I will hope to hear of you or rather from

you by the means of our friend. Think with friendship and tenderness of him, who is with friendship and tenderness inexpressible all yours,

"JAMES THOMSON."

During the year 1744 Mr. Lyttelton came into office; and the earliest exercise of his patronage was to bestow on Thomson the situation of Surveyor general of the Leeward Islands,* the duties of which he performed, by deputy, and of which the profits were 300*l.* a year.

In 1745 his "Tancred and Sigismunda" (the most successful of his tragedies) was performed at Drury Lane with considerable applause. He again found a patron in the Prince of Wales, to whom he says, in the dedication,

"Allow me only to wish, that what I have now the honour to offer to your Royal Highness may be judged not unworthy of your protection, at least in the sentiments which it inculcates. A warm and grateful sense of your goodness to me makes me desirous to seize every occasion of declaring in public my profound respect and dutiful attachment."

Garrick played "Tancred," and Pitt and Lyttelton attended the rehearsals.

Part of the Summer of 1745, and of the Autumn

* It is very remarkable that the Records of the Custom House should not contain any notice of Thomson's appointment as Surveyor General of the Leeward Islands, or to any other employment in the Customs at any of the Plantations. On the 29th of May, 1746, Thomson's friend, Mr. William Paterson, was appointed to that situation.—Letters from Mr. Hume, of the Custom House, to Mr. George Chalmers, 16th and 20th July, 1793.

of 1746, were passed at Hagley. In 1746, the best of all the editions of "The Seasons" appeared.*

Living so close to the Gardens of Richmond Park, Thomson naturally wished to walk in them, and had obtained his friend Mr. Lyttelton's private key, but was obliged to give it up. In a letter written to him Mr. Lyttelton says on the 21st of May, 1747:—

"Dear Thomson,

"I entirely agree with you that you have the same natural right as the nightingales have to the garden of Richmond, but as those iniquitous gardeners will dispute it, and might overcomes right, I doubt you will not be able to keep the key: nor can I refuse to give it up if demanded, therefore I have disposed of it to the Duchess of Bridgewater, who will be better able to maintain her possession than either you or I, at this time. She is very desirous of it, and I could not deny it her as she knows I don't use it myself."

This letter contains a remarkable passage, which with two other letters from Mr. Lyttelton after Thomson's death, show but too plainly that the poet was a better Christian in heart and practice, than in faith; and that Lyttelton's "Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul," were written mainly with a view to the poet's conviction. After noticing the death of many of his relations he says:—

* [Of this, the last edition of "The Seasons" published in Thomson's lifetime, Millar printed 4000 copies.] The copy of the impression of 1736, with Thomson's manuscript corrections, is now the property of the Reverend John Mitford, of Benhall.

"My refuge and consolation is in philosophy—Christian philosophy, which I heartily wish you may be a disciple of, as well as myself. Indeed, my dear friend, it is far above the platonic. I have sent you a pamphlet upon a subject relative to it, which we have formerly talked of. I writ it in Kew Lane last year, and I writ it with a particular view to your satisfaction. You have therefore a double right to it, and I wish to God it may appear to you as convincing as it does to me, and bring you to add the faith to the heart of a Christian.*

The interest which Mr. Lyttelton felt in Thomson's happiness extended to his temporal as well as to his spiritual welfare; and it appears from the following letter, that he had, through Mr. Gray, recommended some lady to the poet as worthy of becoming his wife:—

"Dear Sir, "Kew Lane, Dec. 14, 1747.

"I SHOULD have answered your kind, and truly friendly letter some time ago. My not having answered it hitherto proceeded from my giving it mature and deep consideration. I have considered it in all lights and in all humours, by night, by day, and even during these long evenings. But the result of my consideration is not such as you would wish. My judgment agrees with you, and you know I first impressed yours in her favour. She deserves a better than me, and has as many good and worthy qualities as any woman: nay to others and I hope too men of taste, she has charming and piquant ones: but every man has a singular and uncontrollable imagination of

* Phillimore's Memoirs and Correspondence of George Lord Lyttelton, vol. i. p. 307.

his own: now as I told you before she does not pique mine. I wonder you should treat that objection so lightly, as you seem to do in your last. To strike one's fancy is the same in love that charity is in religion. Though a woman had the form, and spoke with the tongue of angels; though all divine gifts and graces were her's; yet, without striking the fancy she does nothing. I am too much advanced in life to venture to marry, without feeling myself invigorated, and made as it were young again, with a great flame of imagination. But we shall discuss this matter more fully when I have the happiness of seeing you at full leisure. What betwixt judgment and fancy, I shall run a great risk of never entering into the holy state, in the mean time I wish to see you once more happy in it. Forgive me if I say, it would be an ungrateful frowardness, to refuse the bounty of providence, because you have been deprived of former enjoyments. If you cannot again love so exquisitely as you have done, so much the better; you will not then risque being so miserable. To say that one cannot love twice, is utterly unphilosophical, and give me leave to say contrary to my own experience. Can there not be more objects than one for the same passion? If so, why cannot the passion be renewed, when it finds a new object? The flame of any love was never so strong yet, as to burn out the heart. So far from that, the powers of the mind rather grow by exercise. The truth is, it is not a former passion that prevents a second: it is only the hardening of the heart from years and harsh untender business. If you could get so much master of your just grief as to think of a second match, I may be tempted also to try to be happy along with you. I wish you joy of the sun's now turning his all-enlivening and beautiful face

towards us. May the genial spirit of the returning year animate and cheer you, and yet again make you happy! than which nothing can give greater pleasure to yours,

" J. THOMSON.

" P.S. Mr. Gray discharged his commission faithfully, and with very decent gravity; to whom I gave the same answer I send you. The inclosed I received from the consul of Tunis, Mr. Gordon, whose memorial I troubled you with some time ago. It will give you further light in the matter. Do favour poor Dinwiddie against that old serpent, who would sting him to death for having done his duty."*

While at Hagley, Mr. Lyttelton's seat, in October, 1747, he wrote to his sister, Mrs. Thomson, and, as it is the last letter to his family which has been preserved, it will be read with interest. Dr. Johnson received it from Boswell, to whom that lady had given it:—

TO MRS. THOMSON IN LANARK.

" Hagley, in Worcestershire,
October the 4th, 1747.

" My dear Sister,

" I THOUGHT you had known me better than to interpret my silence into a decay of affection, especially as your behaviour has always been such as rather to increase than diminish it. Do not imagine, because I am a bad correspondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I must do myself the justice to tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and constant; and if I had ever reason of complaint against you, of which, by the by, I have not

* Phillimore's Life and Correspondence of George Lord Lyttelton, vol. i. p. 307.

the least shadow, I am conscious of so many defects in myself, as dispose me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

"It gives me the truest heartfelt satisfaction to hear you have a good, kind husband, and are in easy, contented circumstances; but were they otherwise, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderness towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material testimonies of that highest human gratitude I owed them, than which nothing could have given me equal pleasure, the only return I can make them now is, by kindness to those they left behind them. Would to God poor Lizzy had lived longer, to have been a farther witness of the truth of what I say; and that I might have had the pleasure of seeing once more a sister, who so truly deserved my esteem and love. But she is happy, while we must toil a little longer here below: let us, however, do it cheerfully and gratefully, supported by the pleasing hope of meeting yet again on a safer shore, where to recollect the storms and difficulties of life will not, perhaps, be inconsistent with that blissful state.

"You did right to call your daughter by her name; for you must needs have had a particular tender friendship for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having passed the affectionate years of your youth together, and by that great softener and engager of hearts, mutual hardship. That it was in my power to ease it a little, I account one of the most exquisite pleasures of my life. But enough of this melancholy though not unpleasing strain.

"I esteem you for your sensible and disinterested advice to Mr. Bell, as you will see by my letter to him. As I approve, entirely, of his marrying again,

you may readily ask me why I do not marry at all My circumstances have hitherto been so variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce me to keep from engaging in such a state; and now, though they are more settled, and of late, which you will be glad to hear, considerably improved, I begin to think myself too far advanced in life for such youthful undertakings, not to mention some other petty reasons that are apt to startle the delicacy of difficult old bachelors. I am, however, not a little suspicious, that was I to pay a visit to Scotland, of which I have some thoughts of doing soon, I might possibly be tempted to think of a thing not easily repaired if done amiss. I have always been of opinion, that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland; and yet, who more forsaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wise enough to return for a wife. You see I am beginning to make interest already with the Scotch ladies. But no more of this infectious subject. Pray let me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correspondent, yet, perhaps I may mend in that respect. Remember me kindly to your husband, and believe me to be your most affectionate brother,

"JAMES THOMSON."

It was during this visit to Hagley* that he was met by Shenstone, who says, in a letter dated on the 20th of September, 1747:—

"As I was returning from church, on Sunday last, whom should I meet in a chaise, with two horses

* [Pitt was at Hagley at the same time. "Thomson is just come to us, and as he is very unwilling to leave this place soon," &c.—*Lyttelton to George Grenville, Sept.* 1747.]

length-ways, but that right friendly bard, Mr. Thomson? I complimented him upon his arrival in this country, and asked him to accompany Mr. Lyttelton to the Leasowes, which he said he would with abundance of pleasure, and so we parted."

Thomson did not fail to go to the Leasowes, and Shenstone commemorated the circumstance by placing the following inscription in Virgil's grove:—

"Celeberrimo Poetæ
JACOBO THOMSON,
Prope fontes ille non fastiditos
G. S.
Sedem hanc ornavit.
Quæ tibi, quæ tali reddam pro carmine dona?
Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus austri,
Nec percussa juvant fluctu tam littora, nec quæ
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles."*

The "Castle of Indolence" and "Coriolanus" next occupied his attention; and the former, which had been in progress for nearly fifteen years, and was originally intended to consist of a few stanzas ridiculing his own want of energy and that of some of his friends, appeared about May, 1748, and was reprinted in the same year. This was the last production of his pen which he lived to print. The

* To the much celebrated Poet,
JAMES THOMSON,
This seat was placed
near his favourite springs
by
W. S.
How shall I thank thy Muse, so formed to please?
For not the whisperings of the southern breeze,
Nor banks still beaten by the breaking wave,
Nor limpid rills that pebbly valleys lave,
Yield such delight.

sketch of himself is extremely interesting; though he says all, except the first line, was written by a friend, who is supposed to have been Mr. Lyttelton:—

> "A Bard here dwelt, more fat than Bard beseems;
> Who, void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
> On Virtue still, and Nature's pleasing themes,
> Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain;
> The world forsaking with a calm disdain,
> Here laugh'd he careless in his easy seat;
> Here quaff'd, encircled with the joyous train,
> Oft moralizing sage: his ditty sweet*
> He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat."

Of the other portraits a few only have been identified. The sixty-fifth and sixth stanzas allude to Mr. Lyttelton; the sixty-seventh stanza to Mr. Quin; the sixty-ninth to Dr. Murdoch. Another was, he says, intended for his friend, Mr. Paterson, the translator of Paterculus, and who was appointed Surveyor General of the Leeward Islands in 1746.*

About 1748, Thomson again experienced the uncertainty of patronage by the loss of the pension of 100*l.* a year, which the Prince of Wales had granted him. This it would seem, from a passage in the following letter to his friend Paterson, arose from Mr. Lyttelton, whose influence had obtained it, having incurred the Prince's displeasure. West and Mallet, two other friends of Mr. Lyttelton, and who were similarly favoured with pensions, were deprived of them on the same day and for the same reason. This letter is proved to have been

* [One oft stung by spleen of the sixtieth stanza was Dr. Armstrong. The joyous youth of the sixty-second stanza was John Forbes, the Lord President's only son.]

written about April, 1748, by his saying that the "Castle of Indolence" would be published in a fortnight.

"Dear Paterson,

"In the first place, and previous to my letter, I must recommend to your favour and protection Mr. James Smith, Searcher in St. Christopher's: and I beg of you, as occasion shall serve, and as you find he merits it, to advance him in the business of the Customs. He is warmly recommended to me by Sargent, who, in verity, turns out one of the best men of our youthful acquaintance,—honest, honourable, friendly, and generous. If we are not to oblige one another, life becomes a paltry, selfish affair,—a pitiful morsel in a corner. Sargent is so happily married, that I could almost say,—the same case happen to us all.

"That I have not answered several letters of yours, is not owing to the want of friendship and the sincerest regard for you, but you know me well enough to account for my silence, without my saying any more upon that head; besides I have very little to say that is worthy to be transmitted over the great ocean. The world either futilises so much, or we grow so dead to it, that its transactions make but feeble impressions on us. Retirement and nature are more and more my passion every day; and now, even now, the charming time comes on: Heaven is just on the point, or rather in the very act, of giving earth a green gown. The voice of the nightingale is heard in our lane.

"You must know that I have enlarged my rural domain much to the same dimensions you have done yours. The two fields next to me, from the first of which I have walled—no, no—paled in about as much

as my garden consisted of before, so that the walk runs round the hedge, where you may figure *me* walking any time of the day, and sometimes of the night. For *you*, I imagine you reclining under cedars, and there enjoying more magnificent slumbers than are known to the pale climates of the north; slumbers rendered awful and divine by the solemn stillness and deep fervours of the torrid noon. At other times I image you drinking punch in groves of lime or orange trees, gathering pineapples from hedges, as commonly as we may blackberries, poetising under lofty laurels, or making love under full spread myrtles. But, to lower my style a little, as I am such a genuine lover of gardening, why do not you remember me in that instance, and send me some seeds of things that might succeed here during the summer, though they cannot perfect their seed sufficiently in this, to them, uncongenial climate to propagate? in which case is the caliloo, which, from the seed it bore here, came up puny, rickety, and good for nothing. There are other things certainly with you, not yet brought over hither, that might flourish here in the summer time, and live tolerably well, provided they be sheltered in a hospitable stove, or green-house, during the winter. You will give me no small pleasure by sending me, from time to time, some of these seeds, if it were no more but to amuse me in making the trial. With regard to the brother gardeners, you ought to know that, as they are half vegetables, the animal part of them will never have spirit enough to consent to the transplanting of the vegetable into distant, dangerous climates. They, happily for themselves, have no other idea but to dig on here, eat, drink, sleep, and kiss their wives.

"As to more important business, I have nothing

to write to you. You know best. Be, as you always must be, just and honest: but if you are unhappily, romantic, you shall come home without money, and write a tragedy on yourself. Mr. Lyttelton told me that the Grenvilles and he had strongly recommended the person the governor and you proposed for that considerable office, lately fallen vacant in your department, and that there was good hopes of succeeding. He told me also that Mr. Pitt had said that it was not to be expected that offices such as that is, for which the greatest interest is made here at home, could be accorded to your recommendation, but that as to the middling or inferior offices, if there was not some particular reason to the contrary, regard would be had thereto. This is all that can be reasonably desired; and if you are not infected with a certain Creolian distemper, whereof I am persuaded your soul will utterly resist the contagion, as I hope your body will that of the natural ones, there are few men so capable of that unperishable happiness, that peace and satisfaction of mind, at least that proceeds from being reasonable and moderate in our desires, as you. These are the treasures dug from an inexhaustible mine in our own breasts, which, like those in the kingdom of heaven, the rust of time cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. I must learn to work this mine a little more, being struck off from a certain hundred pounds a year which you know I had. West, Mallet, and I were all routed in one day; if you would know why—out of resentment to our friend in Argyll-street.* Yet I have hopes given me of having it restored with interest some time or other. Oh, that 'some time or other' is a great deceiver.

"Coriolanus has not yet appeared on the stage,

* [Lyttelton's town-house was at this time in Argyll-street.]

from the little, dirty jealousy of Tullus* towards him, who alone can act Coriolanus.† Indeed, the first has entirely jockeyed the last off the stage, for this season, like a giant in his wrath. Let us have a little more patience, Paterson; nay, let us be cheerful; at last all will be well, at least all will be over,—here I mean: God forbid it should be so hereafter! But, as sure as there is a God, that will not be so.

"Now that I am prating of myself, know that, after fourteen or fifteen years, the 'Castle of Indolence' comes abroad in a fortnight. It will certainly travel as far as Barbadoes. You have an apartment in it as a night pensioner; which, you may remember, I filled up for you during our delightful party at North Haw. Will ever these days return again? Do not you remember eating the raw fish that were never caught? All our friends are pretty much in *statu quo*, except it be poor Mr. Lyttelton. He has had the severest trial a human tender heart can have;‡ but the old physician, time, will at last close up his wounds, though there must always remain an inward smarting. Mitchell§ is in the House for Aberdeenshire, and has spoke modestly well; I hope he will be something else soon; none deserves better: true friendship and humanity dwell in his heart. Gray is working hard at passing his accounts; I spoke to him about that affair. If he gave you any trouble about it, even that of dunning, I shall think strangely, but I dare say he is too friendly to his old friends, and you are among the oldest.

"Symmer is at last tired of gaiety, and is going to take a semi-country house at Hammersmith. I am

* Garrick. † Quin.

‡ Mrs. Lyttelton died on the 19th of January, 1746-7.

§ Afterwards Envoy to Berlin and a Knight of the Bath.

sorry that honest, sensible Warrender, who is in town, seems to be stunted in church preferment. He ought to be a tall cedar in the house of the Lord. If he is not so at last it will add more fuel to my indignation, that burns already too intensely, and throbs towards an eruption. Peter Murdoch is in town, tutor to Admiral Vernon's son, and is in good hope of another living in Suffolk, that country of tranquillity, where he will then burrow himself in a wife and be happy. Good-natured, obliging Millar, is as usual. Though the Doctor* increases in business he does not decrease in spleen, but there is a certain kind of spleen that is both humane and agreeable, like Jacques in the play: I sometimes, too, have a touch of it.

"But I must break off this chat with you about your friends, which, were I to indulge in, would be endless. As for politics, we are, I believe on the brink of a peace. The French are vapouring at present in the siege of Maestricht, at the same time they are mortally sick in their marine, and through all the vitals of France. It is a pity we cannot continue the war a little longer, and put their agonizing trade quite to death. This siege, I take it, they mean as their last flourish in the war.

"May your health, which never failed you yet, still continue, till you have scraped together enough to return home and live in some snug corner, as happy as the Corycius senex, in Virgil's fourth Georgic, whom I recommend both to you and myself as a perfect model of the truest happy life. Believe me to be ever, most sincerely and affectionately yours,

"JAMES THOMSON."†

* Dr. Armstrong.

† Autograph in the possession of John Wild, Esq.

This letter discloses the reason of "Coriolanus" being delayed, and the same or some other cause continuing to prevent its appearance, its author never witnessed its reception.

It was Thomson's habit to walk to London from his residence in Kew Lane, near Richmond, whenever the weather made it inconvenient to go by water. In one of these journeys from London, he found himself, on reaching Hammersmith, tired and heated, and he imprudently took a boat to convey him to Kew. The walk from the landing-place to his house did not remove the chill which the air on the river had produced, and the next day he found himself in a high fever, a state which his plethoric habit rendered alarming. His disorder yielded, however, to care and medicine, and he was soon out of danger; but being tempted by a fine evening to expose himself to the dew before he was perfectly restored, a relapse took place, and he was speedily beyond human aid. The moment his situation became known in town, his friends, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Reid, and Dr. Armstrong hastened to him at midnight; but their presence availed nothing, and they had only the melancholy satisfaction of witnessing his last moments. He expired on the 27th of August, 1748, having within a few days completed his forty-eighth year. Of his illness all that is known* is stated in the following letter from Mr. Mitchell:—

* [Sir Harris has overlooked, in common with all Thomson's biographers, (Allan Cunningham excepted,) the very interesting correspondence respecting Thomson's last illness and death, printed in 1815 in the Culloden Papers:—]

TO THE REVEREND MR. GUSTHART, MINISTER AT EDINBURGH.

" Dear Sir, " Richmond, August, 27th, 1748.

" It is with the most sincere and unaffected concern

*Sir Andrew Mitchell to Patrick Murdoch.*

" Richmond in Surry, Saturday, 27 Aug. [1748].

" My dear P—.

" Our dear friend Thomson died this morning about four o'Clock after a very short illness. His distemper appeared first in the shape of a tertian, but soon ended in a continued fever. I am here to see the last duties fairly paid. I am almost sunk with this last stroke.

" Yours affectionately,
" A. M."

*Armstrong to Murdoch.*

" Dear Peter, " London, August 30, [1748].

" You must have seen a piece of news that could not fail to surprise and shock you. Poor Thomson died last Saturday morning of a fever, which at first appeared to be an intermittent; but in a short time degenerated from a fever, which I hoped would do him a great piece of service, by scouring his habit, into the low nervous malignant one which soon proved fatal to him, as it has to many. This blow makes a hideous gap; and the loss of such an agreeable friend turns some of the sweetest scenes in England into a something waste and desolate, at least for the time; it will be so for a long time with me, for I question whether I shall ever be able to see Richmond again without sorrow and mortification."

*Murdoch to John Forbes.*

" My dearest J. " Naiton, 2nd Sept. [1748].

" You will have had the most unwelcome news of the death of our dear friend. I received it only this morning, and must own that nothing in life has ever more shocked and affected me; it makes such a gap, as the Dr. in his letter to me calls it, in the circle of our acquaintance as nothing can repair;

that I must acquaint you with the death of our worthy friend Mr. Thomson. He expired this morning about

yet we must bear this and everything else in life till we ourselves are released. My first concern, dear F. after I was able to re-collect myself from the shock, was the pain and misery it must give your affectionate heart, and which nothing but time can alleviate."

* * * * * *

*Murdoch to John Forbes.*

"My dearest Forbes, "Ipswich, 8 Sept. 1748.

"Although I wrote you but two posts ago, I cannot let pass any opportunity of conversing with you, how I know you to be oppressed with the deepest melancholy, and in need of all the consolation your friends can lend. But, alas! what can I say? who myself as much stand in need of a comforter. We have lost, my dear F. our old, tried, amiable, open, and honest-hearted Thomson, whom we have never parted from but unwillingly, and never met, but with fresh transport; whom we found ever the same delightful companion, the most faithful depository of our inmost thoughts, and the same sensible sympathising adviser.

"To pretend to be stoical on such a loss, would be an impertinent belying our characters, our tears must flow, and time alone can dry them. Yet we ought not entirely to abandon ourselves, nor overlook such considerations as may be useful on this occasion, and which ought, indeed, to have a very great weight with us—such as the happiness which our dear friend now enjoys; to doubt of it, of a soul like his, would, I think, be little less than arraigning the divine goodness. We may, likewise, rest persuaded that this so early period of his life (alas! too early for us) was yet for him the very fittest and best. Infinite wisdom has done nothing in vain; and without prying too curiously into its designs, it is easy to imagine a variety of events that might have rendered his life uncomfortable. Now he is risen from the banquet of life, not cloyed nor disgusted; his fame unsullied, his spirit unbroke, without tasting the distress and misery of old age; and perhaps it were too selfish, as well as impious in us, to murmur at what Heaven has undoubtedly ordered for his good. Think likewise on his own behaviour on the like oc-

4 o'clock after a short illness: his distemper appeared first in the shape of a tertian, but soon turned to a continual fever. I came here on the first notice I had of his illness, and shall see the last duties paid to my deceased friend. I have ordered everything to

casions. He lost Charles Talbot as we have him; and though he retained to his latest hour a most devout veneration of that most excellent person, yet he did not consume himself in unavailing grief. He remembered and commemorated him in that pious and affectionate manner, that we shall ever remember them both. At the same time he acquiesced in the sovereign will of Providence; and bore his loss, (the greatest in all respects that could possibly befall to him) with a manly fortitude. Think likewise, that if anything could disturb the happiness of our departed friend, it would be to see an unbecoming excess of grief in those whom he loved. I think I hear him kindly chide us, and point to a passage in 'The Seasons,' that admirably suits our case.

"Let us ever cherish the memory of our dear friend, profit by the inimitable lessons he has left us, and love one another with that affection which united the little circle of his bosom friends."

Andrew Millar, the bookseller, received on his return from Scotland the news of Thomson's death, and thus feelingly speaks of his friend in a letter to young Mr. Forbes.

"DEAR SIR, "[London], 10 Sept. 1748.

"I THANK God, we all arrived safe here, after a most agreeable journey. But ever since I have never been able to act or think, for that very evening our dear friend Thomson was buried. How it dampt all my joy, you who knew him well, and how I loved him can best feel. I really was not able to write you, and if the enclosed had not come last night, I question if I should now.

"Mr. Mitchell spent the evening with me, we remembered you kindly and all surviving friends. Poor Mr. Lyttelton is in great grief, as indeed are all his friends, and even those that did not know him;—but I can add nothing to the enclosed, and therefore shall leave that melancholy subject to us, but to him full of joy, on which account we ought to submit."

be sealed up, and you will take the most proper method to acquaint his relations with what has happened, as I do not know how to direct to them. At present I see no occasion for any of them coming to London as it will only occasion expense, and they shall have notice how affairs stand. I am, dear Sir, your most humble servant,

"ANDREW MITCHELL."

The sincerity and warmth of Mr. Lyttelton's affection for Thomson are strikingly shown in two letters to Doctor Doddridge. On the 30th of September, 1748, a month after the poet's death, he says, after alluding to his own recent loss :—

"BUT God's will be done! it has pleased his providence to afflict me lately with a new stroke in the sudden death of poor Mr. Thomson, one of the best and most beloved of my friends. He loved my Lucy too, and was loved by her; I hope and trust in the Divine Goodness that they are now together in a much happier state: that is my consolation, that is my support."*

On the 7th of November following, Mr. Lyttelton wrote again to Dr. Doddridge, and gave the following satisfactory account of Thomson's religious sentiments on his death-bed :—

"THOMSON I hope and believe died a Christian. Had he lived longer I don't doubt but he would have openly profest his faith; for he wanted no courage in what he thought right, but his mind had been much perplexed with doubts which I have the pleasure to think my book on St. Paul had almost entirely removed. He told me so himself, and in his sickness

* Phillimore's Memoirs of Lord Lyttelton, vol. i. p. 406.

declared so to others. This is my best consolation in the loss of him, for as to the heart of a Christian he always had that, in a degree of perfection beyond most men I have known."*

Mr. Lyttelton and Mr. Mitchell charged themselves with the care of his effects; and on the 25th of October, 1748, letters of administration were granted to them as attorneys of his sister, and next of kin, Mary Craig of Edinburgh, formerly Thomson, wife of William Craig, for her use.

It was the next object of these generous friends to bring Thomson's posthumous tragedy before the public, and in 1749, "Coriolanus" was acted for the benefit of his relations. The prologue, written by Mr. Lyttelton, and spoken by Quin, is peculiarly entitled to notice from the affecting manner in which the writer speaks of the author:†—

"I come not here your candour to implore
For scenes, whose author is, alas! no more;
He wants no advocate his cause to plead;
You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.
No party his benevolence confined,
No sect—alike it flow'd to all mankind.
He loved his friends,—forgive this gushing tear,
Alas! I feel I am no actor here,—
He loved his friends with such a warmth of heart,
So clear of interest, so devoid of art,
Such generous friendship, such unshaken zeal,
No words can speak it, but our tears may tell.
Oh candid truth, O faith without a stain,
Oh manners gently firm, and nobly plain,
Oh sympathizing love of others' bliss,
Where will you find another breast like his?
Such was the Man—the Poet well you know:
Oft has he touch'd your hearts with tender woe:

* Ibid. 409.

† [Quin spoke the Prologue in a suit of mourning.]

Oft in this crowded house, with just applause
You heard him teach fair Virtue's purest laws;
For his chaste Muse employ'd her heaven-taught lyre
None but the noblest passions to inspire,
Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,
One line, which dying he could wish to blot.
Oh, may to-night your favourable doom
Another laurel add to grace his tomb:
Whilst he, superior now to praise or blame,
Hears not the feeble voice of human fame.
Yet if to those, whom most on earth he loved,
From whom his pious care is now removed,
With whom his liberal hand, and bounteous heart,
Shared all his little fortune could impart;
If to those friends your kind regard shall give
What they no longer can from his receive,
That, that, even now, above yon starry pole,
May touch with pleasure his immortal soul."

Truly was the speaker made to say he was no actor on that occasion; and the feeling which he evinced, in reciting these verses, gave increased effect to their touching eloquence.

Within a few months after his death, his old patroness, the Countess of Hertford, stated, in a letter to Lady Luxborough, that Shenstone had shown her his Poem on Autumn, and the honour he had done Thomson's memory in it; adding that he told her he purposed erecting an urn to him in Virgil's Grove. In a letter to Shenstone in November, 1753, that lady, then Duchess of Somerset, requested him to allow Dodsley to add to his Collection His poem called "Damon's Bower." These passages prove her grace's respect for Thomson's memory, and render Johnson's remark, that he had displeased her, unlikely. Shenstone speaks feelingly of Thomson's death in a letter written on the 3rd of September following:—

"Poor Mr. Thomson, Mr. Pitt tells me, is dead. He was to have been at Hagley this week, and then I should probably have seen him here. As it is I will erect an urn in Virgil's Grove to his memory. I was really as much shocked to hear of his death, as if I had known him and loved him a number of years. God knows I lean on a very few friends, and if they drop me, I become a wretched misanthrope."

The author of The Seasons is thus alluded to in Shenstone's Poem, mentioned by the Duchess of Somerset:—

"Though Thomson, sweet descriptive bard!
Inspiring Autumn sung;
Yet how should we the months regard
That stopped his flowing tongue?

"Ah! luckless months, of all the rest,
To whose hard share it fell!
For sure he was the gentlest breast
That ever sung so well.

"He! he is gone, whose moral strain
Could wit and mirth refine;
He! he is gone, whose social vein
Surpass'd the power of wine.

"Fast by the streams he deign'd to praise
In yon sequester'd grove,
To him a votive urn I raise,
To him and friendly Love.

"Yes, there, my Friend! forlorn and sad,
I grave your Thomson's name,
And there his lyre, which Fate forbade
To sound your growing fame.

"There shall my plaintive song recount
Dark themes of hopeless woe,
And faster than the dropping fount
I'll teach mine eyes to flow.

" There leaves in spite of Autumn green,
Shall shade the hallow'd ground,
And Spring will there again be seen
To call forth flowers around.

" But no kind suns will bid me share,
Once more, his social hour;
Ah! Spring! thou never canst repair
This loss to Damon's bower."

Thomson's funeral was attended by Quin, Mallet, Millar, Mr. Robertson, (the brother-in-law of his Amanda,) and another friend, probably either Mr. Lyttelton or Mr. Mitchell. He was buried* in Richmond Church, under a plain stone without any inscription, and his works formed his only memorial until the erection of the monument in Westminster Abbey, which was opened to public view on the 10th of May, 1762. The cost of it was defrayed by an edition of his works printed under the superintendence of Murdoch, in two quarto volumes, and published by subscription. It is situated between those of Shakespeare and Rowe, and Thomson appears sitting, leaning his left arm upon a pedestal, and holding a book with the cap of Liberty in his right hand. Upon the pedestal is carved a bas-relief of " The Seasons," to which a boy points, offering him a laurel crown. At the feet of the figure is a tragic mask and ancient harp. The whole is supported by a projecting pedestal;

* [Thomson appears, from the sale catalogue of his effects, after his death, to have enjoyed at least a degree of ease and luxury seldom the lot of poets. His house was well provided with furniture, plate, books, and a good collection of prints; and his cellar was stored with Burgundy, red port, old hock, Mountain, Madeira, Rhenish, and Edinburgh and Dunbar Ales.—*Preface to the Culloden Papers*, 4to. 1815, p. xxii.]

and on a panel is inscribed his name, age, and the date of his death, with the following lines:—

> "Tutored by thee, sweet poetry exalts
> Her voice to ages; and informs the page
> With music, image, sentiment and thoughts
> Never to die;"

taken from his "Summer." The monument was designed by Adam, and executed by Spang.

Lord Buchan afterwards (1792) placed a small brass tablet in Richmond Church with the following inscription:—

> In the earth, below this tablet,
> are the remains of
> JAMES THOMSON,
> Author of the beautiful Poems, entituled
> "The Seasons," the "Castle of Indolence," &c.
> who died at Richmond
> on the 27th of August,
> and was buried
> on the 29th O. S. 1748.
> The Earl of Buchan,
> unwilling that
> so good a Man, and sweet a Poet,
> should be without a memorial,
> has denoted the place of his interment,
> for the satisfaction of his Admirers,
> in the year of our Lord,
> M.DCC.XCII.

Beneath this inscription, his lordship added this beautiful passage from "Winter:"—

> "Father of Light and Life! thou Good Supreme!
> O teach me what is good! teach me thyself!
> Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
> From every low pursuit! and feed my soul
> With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
> Sacred, substantial, never fading bliss!"

By the sale of an edition of his works, undertaken

for the purpose of aiding his relations, and the profits of his last Tragedy, a sufficient sum was raised to liquidate his debts, and leave a decent residue.*

There is reason to believe that a fragment of a poem was found amongst Thomson's papers, as Dr. Bell remarks, September, 1791, in a letter to Lord Buchan:—

"I remember to have heard my aunt, Mrs. Thom-

* A correspondent in the European Magazine, for 1819, has afforded very satisfactory information about the sums which Thomson obtained for several of his works, and of the dates of the agreements respecting them, derived from an appeal against a decision of the Court of Chancery, many years since, on a question of literary property.

It appears that Thomson sold "Sophonisba," a Tragedy, and "Spring," a Poem, to Andrew Millar, on the 16th of January, 1729, for 137*l.* 10s. On the 18th of July, in the same year, he sold to John Millan, "Summer," "Winter," "Autumn," "Britannia," Poem to Newton, Hymn on the Seasons, and an Essay on Descriptive Poetry, for 105*l.* On the 16th of June, 1738, Andrew Millar purchased these Poems of John Millan at the original price. [The above three documents—I have seen them—are now (1860) in the possession of George Daniel, Esq. of Canonbury. Mr. Daniel also possesses the original assignment made by Jean and Mary Thomson, dated 7 Feb. 1751, of "Coriolanus," "Alfred," and fifteen poems, for 200*l.*] On the 13th of June, 1769, Andrew Millar's executors sold the copyright of the whole by auction to fifteen London booksellers, for the sum of 505*l.* Soon after Davis, the bookseller, sold half his twelfth, for the shares were unequal, to Becket and Dehondt, not of the original list of purchasers, for 21*l.* being the price he had paid for that proportion.

This was a close sale; and Alexander Donaldson, the Edinburgh bookseller, who wished to attend, was not admitted. He then published a copy of "The Seasons" at Edinburgh, stated in the title to be printed in 1768, the sale of which was said, however, to have begun before the auction of the copyright took place.

son, say, that the outlines of a fine poem were found among her brother's papers, after his death. If this was the case, Mr. Gray, of Richmond Hill, got possession of them. The heirs of that gentleman will be able to ascertain the fact; and to put it in my power, if they are worthy of Thomson's character, to give them to the public. Your lordship has taken so much trouble in this little plan of mine, that I am ashamed to throw out this hint."

An original picture of Thomson, by Slaughter, is preserved at Dryburgh Abbey, the seat of Lord Buchan, and has been engraved.* It belonged to the poet, and hung in the room he used at Slaughter's Coffee-house. On the back is this inscription, in his Lordship's hand-writing:—

"Procured for the Earl of Buchan by his friend, Richard Cooper, Esq., engraver. Thomson and his friends, Dr. Armstrong, Peter Murdoch, &c. used to frequent Old Slaughter's Coffee-House, London, and his portrait was painted at that time by Slaughter, a kinsman of old Slaughter.

"Dec. 3, 1812. "BUCHAN."

A monument to Thomson has been erected on an eminence, about half-way between Kelso and Ednam, but the only admiration which it is likely to excite is for the motives of those to whom it owes its existence.

In the whole range of British poetry, Thomson's "Seasons," are, perhaps, the earliest read, and

* [The best portrait of Thomson is the head, by Aikman, still preserved at Hagley, and which the great Lord Chatham described as "beastly like." The portrait by Paton, painted in 1746, was presented, in 1858, to the National Portrait Gallery, by the Poet's grand-niece, Miss Bell, of Spring Hall, Coldstream.]

most generally admired. He was the Poet of Nature, and, studying her deeply, his mind acquired that placidity of thought and feeling which an abstraction from public life is sure to produce. She was to him, as he has himself said, a source of happiness of which Fortune could not deprive him :—

> " I care not, Fortune, what you me deny;
> You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;
> You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
> Through which Aurora shows her brightening face;
> You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
> The woods and lawns, by living stream at eve:
> Let health my nerves, and finer fibres brace;
> Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave."

His pictures of scenery and of rural life are the productions of a master, and render him the Claude of Poets. " The Seasons" are the first book from which we are taught to worship the goddess to whose service the bard of Ednam devoted himself; and who is there that has reflected on the magnificence of an extended landscape, viewed the sun as he emerges from the horizon, or witnessed the setting of that glorious orb when he leaves the world to reflection and repose, and does not feel his descriptions rush upon the mind, and heighten the enjoyment?

It has been said that the style of that work is pompous, and that it contains many faults. The remark is partially true. Thomson's style is, in some places, monotonous, from its unvaried elevation; but to him Nature was a subject of the profoundest reverence; and he, doubtless, considered that she ought to be spoken of with solemnity.

It is evident, however, from one of his verses, which is often cited, that he was aware simplicity is the most becoming garb of beauty. Another objection to "The Seasons" is, that they contain frequent digressions; and, though it is made by an authority, from which it may be presumptuous to dissent, the justice of the observation cannot, perhaps, be established. Every one who has read them will admit that the History of Celedon and Amelia, and of Lavinia, for example, have afforded as much pleasure as any other parts; and a poem descriptive of scenery, and of changes in the weather, requires the introduction of human beings to give it life and animation. A painter is not censured for adding figures to a landscape, and he is only required to render them graceful, and to make them harmonize with his subject. The characters in "The Seasons" are all in keeping; a gleaner is as necessary to a harvest-field as a lover to a romance; and it seems hypercritical to say that there should be nothing to interest the feeling in the lives of the inhabitants of the villages or hamlets which are described.

Another test of the soundness of this criticism is, to inquire, whether "The Seasons" do not owe their chief popularity to those very digressions. Few persons will read a volume, however beautiful the descriptions which it contains, unless they are relieved by incidents of human life; and, if it were possible to strip "The Seasons" of every passage not strictly relevant, they would probably lose their chief attractions, and soon be thrown aside.

One charm of poetry is, that it often represents the idiosyncrasy of the Poet's mind, and which is most conspicuous in the episodes to the immediate subject of his labours. The thoughts which led him astray may not, unfrequently, be discovered; and it is on such occasions, chiefly, that those beautiful passages which become aphorisms to future ages occur. Genius seems then to cast aside all the fetters that art imposes; and the mistress who has cheered his hopes, or the coquette who has abandoned him, his friend, or his enemy, as they present themselves to his imagination, are sure to be commemorated in words glowing with the fervour of inspiration. While he pursues the thread of his tale, we are reminded of the Poet only; and though we admire his artistical skill, it is not until he breaks upon us in some burst of passion that we sympathize with the Man, and are excited to kindred enthusiasm.

To the power of painting scenery, and delineating the softer and more pleasing traits of character, Thomson's genius seems to have been confined. Truly has he said of himself,

> " I solitary court
> The inspiring breeze, and meditate the book
> Of Nature, ever open; aiming thence,
> Warm from the heart, to pour the moral song:"

but he was incapable of describing the heart when assailed by boisterous passions; and his representations of ambition, patriotism, or revenge, are feeble. His tragedies, though not without merit as compositions, are declamatory, cold, and vapid. His heroes and heroines relate their woes in good

verse; but we remain unmoved, and follow them to their fate with the indifference of stoics. No man was animated by a stronger or more disinterested love of Public freedom than Thomson, but his "Liberty" is read only because it is one of his works; and it is not likely that it will ever become popular. His patriotism has, however, found its noblest reward, by his "Rule Britannia" having become the second National, and first War-song of his Country.

The "Castle of Indolence" displays greater poetical invention than any other of his pieces; and, little as allegory is suited to the existing taste, it must still be read with pleasure. Of his Odes and minor articles there is little that need be said; and part of them have already been sufficiently noticed. His "Hymn" is destined to be as permanent a favourite as "The Seasons," to which, indeed, it is an appropriate conclusion, and, like every other production of its author, displays the highest veneration for the Deity.

To these remarks will be added a letter from Voltaire to Mr. Lyttelton on receiving a copy of Thomson's works:—

"A Paris, 17th May, 1790. N. St.

"Sir,

"You was beneficent to Mr. Thomson, when he lived, and you is so to me in favouring me with his works. I was acquainted with the author when I stayed in England. I discovered in him a great genius, and a great simplicity, I liked in him the poet and the true philosopher, I mean the lover of mankind. I think that without a good stock of such a philosophy a poet

is just above a fidler, who amuses our ears and cannot go to our soul.

"I am not surprised your nation has done more justice to Mr. Thomson's Seasons than to his dramatic performances; there is one kind of poetry of which the judicious readers and the men of taste are *the* proper judges; there is another that depends upon the vulgar, great or small, tragedy and comedy are of these . . . . . they must be suited to the turn of mind and to the ability of the multitude and proportioned to their taste: your nation two hundred years since, is used to a wild scene, to a crowd of tumultuous events, to an emphatical poetry mixed with loose and comical expressions, to murthers, to a lively representation of bloody deeds, to a kind of horrour which seems often barbarous and childish, all faults which never sullied the Greek, the Roman or the French stage, and, give me leave to say, that the taste of your politest countrymen differs not much in point of tragedy from the taste of the mob at bear garden; 'tis true we have too much of words if you have too much of action, and perhaps the perfection of the art should consist in a due mixture of the French taste and English energy. Mr. Addison, who would have reached to that pitch of perfection had he succeeded in the amorous part of his tragedy as well as in the part of Cato, warned often your nation against the corrupted taste of the stage, and since he could not reform the genius of the country, I am afraid the contagious distemper is past curing.

"Mr. Thomson's tragedies seem to me wisely intricated, and elegantly writ; they want perhaps some fire, and it may be that his heroes are neither moving nor busy enough, but taking him all in all, methinks he has the highest claim to the greatest esteem; your

friendship, Sir, is a good vouchsafer for his merit. . . . . Give me leave to send you a little performance of mine, 'tis but a pebble I do offer to you for your precious stones. I am with the highest respect, Sir, your most humble obedient servant.

"VOLTAIRE."

It must be evident, from the Letters in this Memoir, that Thomson did not excel in correspondence; and his dislike to writing letters, which was very great, may have been either the cause or effect of his being inferior in this respect to other Poets of the last century.

Thomson's character was in every respect consistent with what his writings lead us to expect. He was high-minded, amiable, generous, and humane. Equable in his temper, and affable in his deportment, he was rarely ruffled except by some act of cruelty or injustice; and, as he magnanimously forgave the petty assaults which envy or malignity levelled at him, and stood aloof from the Poetical warfare which raged with great heat during some part of his career, he was soon, as if by common consent, respected by all the belligerents. His society was select and distinguished. Pope, Hill, Dr. Armstrong, the Bishop of Derry, Mr. afterwards Sir Andrew Mitchell, Mendez, Dr. De la Cour, Mallet, Hammond, whom he eulogizes in "The Seasons," Quin, and, above all, Mr. Lyttelton, were his most intimate friends. With Pope he lived on terms of great friendship; and, according to Dr. Johnson, he displayed his regard for him in a Poetical epistle addressed to Thomson, while he was in Italy in 1731, but of which Pope "abated

the value by transplanting some of the lines into his Epistle to Arbuthnot." Mr. Robertson stated, in reply to Mr. Park's question,* whether Pope did not often visit Thomson, "Yes, frequently. Pope has sometimes said, 'Thomson, I'll walk to the end of your garden, and then set off to the bottom of Kew Foot Lane, and back.' Pope courted Thomson, and Thomson was always admitted to Pope, whether he had company or not."

Next to poetry Thomson was most fond of civil and natural history, voyages and travels, and in his leisure hours he found amusements in gardening. Of the fine arts, music was his chief delight; but he was an admirer of painting and sculpture, and formed a valuable collection of prints and drawings from the antique.

The besetting sin of Thomson's character was indolence; and of this he was himself fully aware, as he alludes to the failing in himself as well as in some of his friends, in the "Castle of Indolence." He seldom rose before noon, and his time for composition was generally about midnight. His manners are sometimes represented as having been coarse; but his zealous defender, Lord Buchan, asserts, on the contrary, that Lord Chatham, Lord Temple, Lord Lyttelton, Sir Andrew Mitchell, Dr. Armstrong, and Dr. Murdoch, agreed in declaring that he was "a gentleman at all points." His intimate friend, Mr. Robertson, told Mr. Park, that

* In October, 1791, Thomas Park, Esq. the poet, called on Mr. Robertson, who was surgeon to the Royal Household at Kew, the intimate friend of Thomson, with the view of gaining information about him. He committed to paper all he gleaned, and it has since been printed.

"Thomson was neither a petit maître nor a boor; he had simplicity without rudeness, and a cultivated manner without being courtly;" and this may, perhaps, be considered the most accurate account of his deportment.

Much light is often thrown on a man's character by anecdotes. Of Thomson, however, very few are remembered, and the following are introduced because his previous biographers have thought them worthy of notice, rather than from any particular claims which they possess to attention.

It is said that he was so careless about money, that once, when paying a brewer he gave him two bank notes rolled together instead of one, and, when told of his mistake, he appeared perfectly indifferent, saying, "he had enough to go on without it." On one occasion he was robbed of his watch between London and Richmond, and when Mr. Robertson expressed regret for his loss, he replied, "Pshaw, I am glad they took it from me, it was never good for any thing." Having invited some friends to dinner, one of them informed him that there was a general stipulation there should be no hard drinking. Thomson acquiesced, only requiring that each man should drink his bottle. The terms were accepted unconditionally, and, when the cloth was removed, a three quart bottle was set before each of his guests.

In person Thomson was rather stout and above the middle size; his countenance was not remarkable for expression, though, in his youth, he was considered handsome, but in conversation his face became animated and his eye fiery and intellectual.

Silent in mixed company, his wit and vivacity seemed reserved for his friends, and in their society he was communicative, playful, and entertaining. Few men possessed in a greater degree the art of creating firm and affectionate friendships. Those with whom he became acquainted at the commencement of his career loved him till its close; and the individuals who had given to his life its sweetest enjoyments watched over its death-bed, and became the guardians of his fame, by superintending the only monuments of which genius ought to be ambitious, a complete edition of his works, and a tablet in Westminster Abbey.

„It has been remarked that the poets of the day did not commemorate Thomson's genius by exerting their own in honour of his memory; and an epigram appeared in consequence. There is not, however, much justice in the remark. Not only did Collins, Shenstone, Lyttelton, Mendez, and others, sing his praises in appropriate strains, but immediately after his decease, "Musidorus, a Poem sacred to his memory," appeared; and since that time Burns, Pye, the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen, and others, have imitated their example. That lady became possessed of his house near Richmond, and showed her respect for the Poet, by preserving every memorial of him which could be found.

In a retired part of the gardens she replaced Thomson's favourite seat, and hung votive tablets or inscriptions round it, in honour of her admired Poet, whose bust on a pediment of the seat on entering it, had the following sentence:—

"Here Thomson sung
The Seasons, and their change."

Within the Alcove* Mrs. Boscawen placed the little table, on which it is said the Poet penned many of his lines. The inside was further adorned with well adapted citations from other writers, who have eulogized his talents; and in the centre, was the following inscription:—

"Within this pleasing retirement,
allured by the music of the nightingale,
which warbled in soft unison
to the melody of his soul,
in unaffected cheerfulness,
and genial, though simple elegance,
lived
JAMES THOMSON!
Sensibly alive to all the beauties of nature,
he painted their images as they rose in review;
and poured the whole profusion of them
into his inimitable
SEASONS!
Warmed with intense devotion
to the Sovereign of the Universe,
its flame glowed through all his compositions.
Animated with unbounded benevolence,
with the tenderest social sensibility,
he never gave one moment's pain
to any of his fellow creatures;
save, only, by his death,
which happened at this place,
on the
27th day of August, 1748."

Thomson was never married, and in his letter to his sister, in 1747, he says he was too poor to form a domestic establishment. The only woman to whom he was known to be attached, was Miss Young, daughter of Captain Gilbert Young, of that name, in Gulyhill, in Dumfriesshire. She was a

* [There is an engraving of this Alcove by Medland before T. Park's Poems, 8vo. 1797.]

very fine young woman of superior endowments, and married Vice-Admiral John Campbell. Her lover has celebrated her in several poems by the name of "Amanda," and so deep was his passion, that his friend, Mr. Robertson, who married her sister, considers that his disappointment in obtaining her rendered him indifferent to life. One, if not the only impediment to their union, was his straitened circumstances.

Thomson was, as has been before stated, one of nine children. Of his sisters, only three are known to have married. Jean, the eldest, was the wife of Mr. Robert Thomson, Master of the Grammar School at Lanark, with whom Boswell says, in July, 1777, he had placed two of his nephews. She was then an old woman, but having retained her memory, gave that writer many particulars of the Poet, together with the letter which Johnson has printed. Her son Robert, who was a student of medicine in Edinburgh, died in his father's lifetime at Lanark; and of her daughters, Elizabeth was born before 1747, and Beatrix married Mr. Thomas Prentice of Jerviswood. Mrs. Thomson died at Lanark, on the 3rd of September, 1781.

Elizabeth, his second and favourite sister, was the wife of the Reverend Robert Bell, Minister of Strathaven in Clydesdale, and died sometime before 1747. In reply to Mr. Bell's request that he would consent to their marriage he wrote her the following letter:—

"My dear Sister,

"I RECEIVED a letter from Mr. Robert Bell, Minister of Strathaven, in which he asks my consent to his

marriage with you. Mr. Gusthart acquainted me with this some time ago; to whose letter I have returned an answer, which he tells me he has showed you both. I entirely agree to this marriage as I find it to be a marriage of inclination, and founded upon long acquaintance and mutual esteem. Your behaviour hitherto has been such as gives me very great satisfaction, in the small assistance I have been able to afford you. Now you are going to enter upon a new state of life, charged with higher cares and duties, I need not advise you how to behave in it, since you are so near Mr. Gusthart, who, by his good counsel and friendly assistance, has been so kind to you all along; only I must chiefly recommend to you to cultivate, by every method, that union of hearts, that agreement and sympathy of tempers, in which consists the true happiness of the marriage state. The economy and gentle management of a family is a woman's natural province, and from that her best praise arises. You will apply yourself thereto as it becomes a good and virtuous wife. I dare say I need not put you in mind of having a just and grateful sense of, and future confidence in, the goodness of God, who has been to you a 'Father to the fatherless.'. Though you will hereafter be more immediately under the protection of another, yet you may always depend upon the sincere friendship, and tenderest good offices of your most affectionate brother,

"JAMES THOMSON.

"By last post I wrote to Jeany about the affairs she mentioned to me. Remember me kindly to all friends."

Mrs. Bell had two sons, Dr. James Bell, Minister of Coldstream, who printed a volume of sermons,

and who intended to publish an edition of his uncle's works, and Thomas Bell, who died a merchant at Jamaica.

Mary, the poet's youngest sister, married Mr. William Craig, merchant of Edinburgh; and dying (1790), was buried in the Grey Friars Churchyard, beside the remains of her mother. She had only one son, James Craig, an ingenious architect, who planned the new town of Edinburgh, and died in that city in 1795. He intended to erect a pillar to his uncle in the village of Ednam, and wished Dr. Beattie to write an appropriate inscription. The intention was not carried into effect, but Beattie's sensible letter in reply to the request, in which he ridicules inscriptions in Latin to an English poet, and states what ought to be said on these occasions, might have been read with advantage by those who superintended Burn's monument. Lord Buchan's exuberant zeal, in honour of Thomson, in crowning his bust, and other fooleries, approaches so nearly to the ridiculous, that his motive did not prevent his being laughed at. The annual commemoration of the Poet's birth is in better taste; and proves the generous pride with which

> "——— Scotia, with exulting tear,
> Proclaims that Thomson was her son."

Lord Lyttelton has justly said of Thomson's writings, that they contain

> "No line which, dying he could wish to blot;"

and, considering the taste of the age in which he lived, this praise is perhaps the highest which could be pronounced. With a slight alteration the same

eulogy may be passed on his whole life; for it was free from a single act which could create remorse. To his relations he was liberal and affectionate; to his friends faithful and devoted: viewing all mankind with beneficence and love, he performed with exemplary but unostentatious piety that first of Christian virtues, to teach the world to reverence the Creator in His Works, and to learn from them veneration for His Wisdom and confidence in His Mercy.

# APPENDIX.

[The following Letters from Thomson to Mallet, eight in number, were first printed by me, in 1859, in the fourth volume of the "Miscellanies" of the Philobiblon Society, and are here reprinted, with some additional notes, by permission of the Society.

The originals are in the possession of Mr. John Murray, of Albemarle Street. P. C.]

# APPENDIX.

## No. I.

DEAR MALLET, July 10, 1725.

I HAD the pleasure of yours that same day I writ to you. If you knew the satisfaction the sight of your hand gives me, you would not spare me frequent letters. I shall not insist just now till I hear from you again. You may take what liberties you please with my poem,* and I will thank you for it. Your own celebrated performance† is a shining instance of your being able to enter into the very spirit of a piece where nature reigns. The six lines you favour me with raise my expectation vastly of the whole. The character expressed in them is lovely, natural, and finely touched. *Sweetness is hers, &c.* is both easy and pathetic.

"The native wit, the look, the living," &c. the (the) there instead of (a) is a happy turn:—"the unstudied smile" is inimitable.‡ Mr. Savage said he

* "Winter," first published in 1726.

† This refers, and importantly, to "A Winter's Day," by Mallet

‡ Thomson refers to Mallet's poem "To Mira, from the Country," first published in Savage's Miscellany, 8vo. 1726.

was expecting it in his "Miscellany." I shall be impatient to see your plot. To fill up this letter I shall give you a few loose lines I composed in my last evening walk, they may be once worth the reading but no more.

## HYMN ON SOLITUDE.

HAIL ever pleasing Solitude!
Companion of the wise and good!
But from whose awful piercing eye
The herd of fools and villains fly.
O, how I love with You to walk!
And listen to your silent talk
Which innocence and truth imparts,
And melts the most obdurate hearts.
A thousand shapes You wear with ease,
And still in every shape You please.
Now wrapt in some mysterious dream,
A sage Philosopher You seem;
Now a Religious port You bear,
And now a Hermit you appear;
Now o'er the meads and groves You fly,
And now you sweep the vaulted sky,
And Nature dances in your eye.
Then straight again You court the shade
And pining hang the pensive head;
A shepherd now You haunt the plain,
And warble forth Your oaten strain.
Now a gay Huntress, by the dawn
You trip it o'er the dewy lawn.
A Lover now; with all the grace
Of that sweet passion in Your face,
A thousand shapes You wear with ease,
And still in every shape You please.
Your's is the fragrant morning blush,
And your's the silent evening hush,
Your's the refulgent noonday gleam,
And your's ah then! the gelid stream.
Descending angels bless Your train,
The virtues of the Sage and Swain.

Soft Innocence in white array'd,
And Contemplation rears his head;
Religion with her awful brow
And all the Muses wait on You.
O, let me pierce Your secret cell,
And in Your deep recesses dwell,
For ever from the world retir'd,
For ever with your raptures fir'd;
Nor by a Mortal seen save he
A Mallet or a Murdoch *be*.*

Your's heartily,

J. T.

## No. II.

DEAR MALLET, London, June 13, 1726.

YOUR last letter gave me a pleasure which none but a friend could receive, from the best of that name. Heaven is very bounteous to me in your friendship. In that regard I am rich beyond the power of Fortune.

And think you it then an easy matter to lose the approbation I had set my heart upon? Is the generous thirst for fame romantic; or rather don't you, at present, feel it most gloriously prevalent in your own bosom, while thus you are forming such immortal schemes? Have you set a price on my fame? Twenty guineas,† twenty curses on them! if they serve me that trick. I expected that our names should have lived together, there, when money and all its lovers shall perish. All the first page might still stand entire, and the others filled out a thousand

* In the printed text both names are omitted.

† The usual dedication-fee—the very sum Sir Spencer Compton (Lord Wilmington) gave Thomson for the dedication of "Winter."

ways. If you will have satire; a remedy the age much wants, and which may be executed with a good design, a public spirit, and success, I need not mention to you the avarice, littleness, luxury, and stupidity of our men of fortune; the general barbarous contempt of Poetry—that noblest gift of Heaven! our venal bards as you have lashed them already, our lewd, low, spiteful writers; hornets of Parnassus, Opéras, Masquerades, Fopperies, and a thousand things. You might make a glorious apostrophe to the drooping Genius of Britain—have Shakespeare and Milton in your eye, and invite to the pursuit of genuine poetry. I have written to Mr. Hill* after such a manner, as he cannot refuse me; so that I am almost certain of receiving another copy of verses from him every day. 'Tis in the press. Millan† has bought paper too—several people have their expectations raised—disappoint us not. Dyer‡ has very luckily, this same day, very handsomely excused himself. Notwithstanding of all your objections; I believe you could with a little trouble make Clio's verses § very pretty—lovely.

I have no time just now, to do justice to the two

* Aaron Hill—"next H—ll essay'd."

† John Millan (d. 1784), the publisher of Thomson's first poem, his "Winter." The "paper" which Millan had bought was for the second edition, now on the eve of publication.

‡ John Dyer—Grongar-Hill Dyer.

§ "Clio must be allowed to be a *most* complete poetess, if she really wrote those poems that bear her name; but it has of late been so abused and scandalized, that I am informed she has lately changed it for that of Myra; and that a dapper Scotch ge tleman, the author of the two last poems in the Miscellany (and an admirer, as appears by the first copy) was the first that new-christened her."—*The British Journal, Saturday, September* 24, 1726. The author of the "two last poems" was David Mallet.

schemes of your Poems, that you favoured me with. All that I shall say at this time is, that they are useful, noble, vast, amazing! Go on with an awakened mind. Faint not, neither weary. How wild you sing, while, I here, warble like a city linnet in a cage. If my beginning of "Summer" please you, I am sure it is good. I have writ more which I'll send you in due time. Let me not by any means want some of your "Excursion."* The idea of that poem strikes me vehemently. The next time I write to you it shall be at large. Neglect not my verses—my fame—'tis but one morning-walk, easily bestowed.

With my devoted heart,

Your friend,

JAM: THOMSON.

P.S. Direct for me only at the Academy in &c.† This for security's sake I send you directly.

My service to Mrs. Stirling.

## No. III.

DEAR MALLET, London, August the 11th, 1726

BELIEVE me I have not hoped in vain. This last sheet of your "Excursion" thoroughly charms me. I cannot say whether there is more thought or fancy; simplicity or sublimity in it. There is a particular gentle, simple, unadorned majesty in your writings. They steal on one, like the great revolutions of the Heavens, without noise. What I think may be corrected, I will not mention till you have once rough-

* A poem by Mallet so called.

† In Little Tower Street, London.

writ the whole. I cannot entertain myself more than by reflecting on some of the many beauties.

> And now th' illusive flame oft seen at eve
> Glides o'er the lawn————

This is an amusing circumstance, and finely expressed.

> Onward she comes with silent steps and slow,
> In her BROWN mantle wrapt————

This equals any image our Milton gave us of the evening.

> That fly with *unreturning* wing away.

To any one who thinks, this is very moving.

> Or to the cypress grove at twilight shun'd
> By passing swains————

Here more is meant than meets the ear. All that about the breeze is a beautiful instance of strong natural simplicity. I shiver at it. You paint Ruin with a masterly hand.

> Ghastful he sits and views *with* stedfast glare
> The falling Bust; the Column gray *with* Moss.

This is such an attitude as I can never enough admire, and even be astonished at.

> Save what the wind sighs, and the *Wailing Owl*
> Screams solitary————

Charmingly dreary!

> Where the *sad* spirit walks with *shadowy* feet
> His wonted round, or lingers o'er his grave.

What dismal simplicity reigns through these two lines! They are equal to any ever Shakespeare wrote on the subject. Your Paraphrase from Job moves all the heart—your Reflections on pride and licentiousness, are full of the most spirit-thought.

Your character of Thirsis is finely selected and engaging. What you say of his humanity and charity, is particularly affecting; and to transcribe any of it and not the whole, would not be justice. Let me, however, mention that comprehensive compound epithet *All-shun'd*, as a beauty I have had too good reason to relish. Thank Heaven there was one exception.

The Mountain Shower, is simple wild nature!
He like the Vulgar fell———

Can anything be more moving, than that a great man should fall like the vulgar! This is a thought which charms one the more, the more one thinks on it. I know where you had it, a meritorious theft! I have still much more to say; and it is with reluctance I quit the subject. If you write well I would almost venture to say that I have a good taste; at least, I am greatly pleased.

Prythee make no apology for your friendly sincerity, know you not that it is not in your power to disoblige me? Why did you not object against my method, with regard to "Summer," when I first gave you an account of it. I told you then expressly that I resolved to contract the season into a day. The uniform appearances of nature in summer easily allow of it. But not to dispute which of the schemes is most preferable, I am so far advanced, having writ three parts of four, that I cannot without the most painful labour alter mine. Let me tell you besides that we entirely agree from the noonday retreat to the evening. I have already written of shade and gloom, and woodland spirits &c., exactly as you hint, more than a week ago. Verdure and flowers belong to the Spring; and fruits to the Autumn; and therefore not to be anticipated. I design towards the end

of my poem to take one short glance of corn fields, ripe for the sickle, as the limit of my performance. I thank you heartily for your hint about personizing of Inspiration, it strikes me. Next post, I will send you a sheet or two more.

You have, I flatter myself, writ a good deal more of your "Excursion," you will not fail to entertain me with it. You have a noble field before you, go on as you have begun, and distant praise, from worth unborn, shall be thine. Mr. Aikman did me the honour of a visit yesternight, he speaks with great warmth and expectation of your poem, and remembers you kindly. We were in the Tavern and drunk your health. His reflections on my writings are very good; but he does not in them, regard the turn of my genius enough, should I alter my way I would write poorly, I must choose what appears to me the most significant epithet, or I cannot with any heart proceed.

Your's entirely,

JAMES THOMSON.

## No. IV.

DEAR MALLET, London, 2 August, 1726

AFTER a tedious silence I had yours. Far from defending these two lines in my translation, I damn them to the lowest depth of the poetical Tophet, prepared of old for Mitchell, Morrice, Rook, Cooke, Beckingham, and a long &c. Wherever I have evidence, or think I have evidence, which is the same thing, I'll be as obstinate as all the mules in Persia.

I have racked my brain about the common blessing of the sun you say is forgot, as much as ever

S—— * did his, in that elaborate description of the tooth ache Dr. Young disconcerted, without being able to hit on it. Your hint of the sapphire, emerald, ruby, strike my imagination with a pleasing taste, and shall not be neglected; but I am resolved not to correct till I have first rough-writ the whole.

In the enclosed sheets of "Summer," I raise the sun to nine or ten o'clock; touch lightly on his withering of flowers; give a group of rural images; make an excursion into the insect kingdom; and conclude with some suitable reflections. I have written a good deal more; you will be notoriously guilty of poetical injustice, if you make me not a proper return.

My idea of your Poem is a description of the grand works of Nature raised and animated by moral and sublime reflections; therefore before you quit this earth you ought to leave no great scene unvisited. Eruptions, earthquakes, the sea wrought into a horrible tempest, the abyss amidst whose amazing prospects, how pleasing must that be of a deep valley covered with all the tender profusion of the Spring. Here if you could insert a sketch of the deluge, what more affecting and noble? Sublimity must be the characteristic of your piece.

Millan is to buy Woodward's History this day for himself, and will transmit to you immediately.

I have not seen these reflections on the Dr.'s† "Installment," but hear they are as wretched as their subject. The Dr.'s very buckram has run short on this occasion; his affected sublimity even fails him, and down he comes with no small velocity.

A star to us, a comet to the foe.

* Savage?

† Young. When Young collected his Works he omitted "The Instalment."

So sings the Knight with the woeful countenance speaking of the King.*

> Shall drive the bloody Jesuits from Thorn,
> A thorn to them, to us a rose he'll prove,
> A thorn to them, to us a rose of love.

You triumph over us translators for excelling your original, which is as if a tailor should reckon himself an hero for killing a ——. How dare you immerse yourself in his utter darkness? Death! to sing after a cuckoo; and abet the murderer of the classics—lies cold in earth—shut out from life and light.

> Wit, friendship, mirth, compos'd his gentle mind.

The muses blush that these and several others, should be called in imitation of the Latin jargon; which rather than imitated should be eschewed, as Job did evil. In earnest, it was a weakness in you to stoop to his importunity. It is not that I am displeased at the English verses; but that you should (detestable!) be said to imitate the Latin.

You complain of your dullness, I only of your haste.

Your ever faithful,

affectionate friend,

JAMES THOMSON.

P. S. I told you already that it was Mr. Grey's own fault, that he had not the book, he promised to come for it, and did not. Dyer's address is Aberglasney, by Landilo Bag: South Wales.

> Thrice groaning, groan'd, and calling thrice he call'd,

is just and pleasant. I'll send you woeful Elegy next post, the packet being already too big.

* Blackmore?

## No. V.

[No date—Sept. or Oct., 1726.]

The reason I did not write to you last post was because I had not the enclosed ready to send you.

They contain a Panegyric on Britain, which may perhaps contribute to make my Poem popular. The English people are not a little vain of themselves and their country. Britannia too includes our native country Scotland. After this I make an excursion to Africa; which I intersperse and conclude with some reflections. What remains of my Poem is a description of thunder and the Evening, Thunder I have writ, and am just now agreeably engaged with the Evening. The beginning of the sheets I have sent you at this time, connects with the cataract; but methinks I am very talkative about myself.

At last I have got a few lines from you, lavish poet! as if it were on purpose to increase my longing, and render me more uneasy; indeed they are very good—but then it vexes the more—they are few. A plague on this poetical parsimony; but however let me con them over.

I think I have told you it before, let me tell you it again, there is an inimitable mixture of animated simplicity and chastised sublimity in what you write. It strikes one forcibly at first, and yet still unfolds brighter, penetrates to the heart, and yet still mixes deeper. As you write in your former agreeable letter, you everyday converse with the sages and the heroes of antiquity. You think like them too, your bosom swells with the same divine ambition, and would if in the same circumstances display the same

I am not a little pleased with these few simple words. The infernal hags come very well in; but I think you may throw a little more horror round them. I have not indeed the whole description.

Illumin'd by the glow-worm's inimic day.

There is a littleness in this, I think, that does not suit the occasion, I would change it for the moon in distress, represented with as much ghastliness as possible, to some such purpose as this:—

Illumin'd faintly by the fading moon.

Shrieking witches in the desert—at the dead of night—terrible!

——————or to invert the year——
And bring wild Winter into summer's place,
Or spread brown Night and tempest o'er the morn.

This is Poetry—this is arousing fancy—enthusiasm—rapturous terror.—Can't you get another epithet for Night? Evening in her brown mantle wrapt. I am not afraid of your finding out as good a one.

Sung by th' ascending demon of the hour.

You leave me as Cervantes does his readers. What is the poetical philosophy of every hour having an ascending demon, it seems to be amusing? I hope you give us the song. I can, mark me, bear it no longer, but must have next post the whole of your "Excursion" over this earth, I say it again, must have it—so fail not.

How came you to be so unreasonable as to expect regularity from S——?* as well might you hope for poetry from a satchel of rhymes, writhed lines and hard words. What in the name of Inconsistency has he to do with being punctual, would you bring the

* Richard Savage, the poet.

wild ass from the range of the desert, he who cries Bray! Bray! and laughs at the letter writing throng? why, he has given me as many promises of a letter this summer as he has writ lines, nay repeated lines; and yet it is well known, it never entered into his head but when he promised to perform—if then. I shall have that letter from him when he is made the Laureate; I am out there too for that may happen. Have you heard that our present blockhead Laureate, or Laureate Blockhead,* has had a fling at Walpole too? He had better bribe them to silence. Posterity will call him, if Posterity hear anything of the matter, the Mævius-Bavius Mæcenas, the discelebrated knight.

What you write about is very diverting. She can make you sigh for all that, when you think upon her. Perhaps I may tell you in my next, whether or not we design to consummate our unfinished loves, and transmit you a letter I received yesterday. I writ to Dennis† a letter on Journals, but have not received an answer; he bid Millan last day give his service to me, and thank me for my letter. That British Journal of Saturday last is more contemptible than language can express, I suspect that Planet-blasted fool Mitchel.‡ I tell you I have sent Pope's

* Laurence Eusden, died 27 Sept. 1730.

† The Critic.

‡ "This poet of warm affections felt so irritably the perverse criticisms of his learned friends, that they were to share alike nothing less than a damnation to a poetical hell. One of these 'blasts' broke out in a vindictive epigram on Mitchell, whom he describes with a 'blasted eye;' but this critic having one literally, the poet, to avoid a personal reflection, could only consent to make the blemish more active:

Why all not faults, injurious Mitchell! Why
Appears one beauty to thy blasting eye?"

*D'Israeli's Literary Character*, i. 122.

letters to the Duke's house,* at that time too I writ about them.

Your's most affectionately,

JAMES THOMSON.

Mr. Hill is not returned yet.

## No. VI.

DEAR MALLET, *Eastbury,*† Sept. 20, 1729.

BY this time I suppose you are returned from London to the downs of Hampshire,‡ and "Eurydice." Was you not interrupted, your forenoons broken, and your spirits unworthily dissipated by the business of the day, how pleasantly would it go on? with what unabated fire? Nothing to do, but to seize the rapturous hour, when Nature prompts and bids the fine ferment of the spirits rise. How delightful! to catch the passions trembling from the heart, that deep-felt delicate harmony, that enchantment which the least touch of every ruder care dissolves. I too am far from that divine freedom, that independent life which the Muses love; but it shall not be long thus, and soon will I hang up my harp upon the willows. I have heard of an agreement among some our modern Goths (who by the bye are even unworthy of that name), by which they bind themselves not to encourage any subscription§ whatever under a certain penalty. Methinks all tolerable authors in

* To the Duke of Montrose's. Mallet was tutor in the Duke's family.

† Bubb Dodington's seat in Dorsetshire.

‡ The Duke of Montrose had a seat, (Stanford House) at Twyford, in Hampshire.

§ For his "Seasons" in quarto. To this want of encouragement he refers in his printed proposals.

this age, all who can give honour and entertainment to it, should in opposition to this, and the general discouragement they labour under, enter into an association not to write at all; or if they do write, for their own pleasure, and that of their particular friends, yet never to publish. At the same time care must be taken that none of your manuscript-publishers get what you write into their hands, but let all be kept as sacred mysteries from profane eyes. Then should we as the Scripture says, have joys which the wicked could not intermeddle with; and if their vanity, not taste, prompted any of them to see what was written, they might for a swinging sum. There would be no danger of their carrying much away with them. It is high time that the poets, who have been all along bubbles to the world, given them the greatest pleasure, and received little in exchange, began to think of some craft; their art is the source of so much pleasure, so commanding, that it is very capable of it, if thus mysteriously managed. But you destroy my whole scheme, by saying, that if they have not got good writing, bad will do as well, and better. A Hurlothrumbo* or anything. Evil is their good. Damn their corruption, their low taste, and all their stupid expence.

To turn my eyes a softer way, I am really touched with a fair neighbour of yours—you know who.—Absence sighs it to me: What is my heart made of? A soft system of love-nerves, too sensible for my quiet, capable of being very happy or very unhappy; I am afraid the last will prevail. Lay your hand upon a kindred heart, and despise me not. I know not what it is, but she dwells upon my thought, in a

* A piece of popular nonsense (now forgotten) by as he was afterwards called Hurlothrumbo Johnson.

mingled sentiment which is the sweetest, the most intimately pleasing the soul can receive, and which I would wish never to want towards some dear object or other.

To have always some secret darling idea, to which one can still have recourse amidst the noise and nonsense of the world, and which never fails to touch us in the most exquisite manner, is an Art of Happiness that Fortune cannot deprive us of. This may be called romantic, but whatever the cause is, the effect is really felt. Pray when you write tell me when you saw her, and with the pure eye of a friend; and when you see her again whisper that I am her most humble servant. But my paper comes to an end: I wish for a walk with you upon the serene downs, to talk of a thousand things. There is nobody's company gives me greater pleasure, I will assuredly see you before I leave the country. I have been in dead solitude here for some days by past. Mr. D[odington] went to London to wait upon the King; now he's returned. Poor Stubbs* kept me alive. He toils here in two parishes for 40*l.* a year; had I paper I would rail for a page more at it.

My services to your people, particularly Mrs. Stirling and Mrs. Graham.

Yours most affectionately,

J. T.

Mr. Stubbs sends his service to you. Pray give mine to the gentle, slender man of God† when you see him.

* The Rev. George Stubbs,—a small poet.

† Murdoch.

## No. VII.

DEAR MALLET, Kew Lane, August 9, 1745.

HAD I known the expensive terms upon which "Hackluyt" was kept, I would not have neglected to send it to Millar's immediately after you spoke to me. But the truth is I like this Book of Voyages so well that I proposed and still propose to purchase it of the owner, if he does not demand too high a price; in which case I must beg leave to have the twelve shillings included. But I think he may be brought to be satisfied with less; for that is quite an unreasonable price for keeping a book seven or eight months. If you approve of this I will ask the favour of Millar to speak to him.

You will do me great injustice if you judge of my friendship by the external forms of it, or by my regular observance of those regards, which I own it is a fault to omit. But I hope in time to amend in this instance, among the many other things we all have and ever will have to correct. It is one of the most endearing qualities of friendship for friends to have a mutual indulgence for one another's faults, yet not to harden themselves in them for that reason. I shall be sincerely glad to sustain and cultivate our old friendship, and I think I dare engage for my heart, that it will not in this be deficient in fully answering to yours. On Monday last I met two servants of yours along with little charming Dolly,* who told me of the encrease of your family. If you was so happy at the time you wrote to me it was un- [kind of you?] to deny me the pleasure [MS. torn]

* Dorothea Mallet; Mallet's daughter by his first wife.

it. I beg my complim[ents to Mrs.] Mallet and wish her [MS. torn]

Believe me to be,

affectionately yours,

J[AMES THOMSON.]

## No. VIII.

DEAR MALLET, Kew Lane, March 31st, 1747.

I RECEIVED yours and am extremely glad to hear that we shall have one good poetical entertainment this year. Your offer is very kind and friendly; but I shall relish the pleasure which I know I must have in reading your poem infinitely better here than in a damned London tavern.

The evenings are now too short for reading there [in a tavern] a poem of any length; and I am besides much of the humour of Sancho. I love to munch a good morsel of that kind by myself in a corner. There cannot be a more delightful corner than Love Lane* is at present wherein to munch a poetical morsel; and should you send me your song for a night or two, the nightingales will strike up at the same time. But if the advanced season of the year make that inconvenient, with regard to the printing, I will suspend my curiosity till it is published, putting the reading of it to the account of the pleasures of this spring. When the good genius of the season delivers you from the demon of the town I will desire you, as a friend to read "Coriolanus."† Tho' pretty much indifferent whether ever he appear

* A Lane so called at Richmond. Was the poem "Amyntor and Theodora, or the Hermit?"

† Thomson's last play.

upon the stage or no, yet I am far from being so with regard to his having your approbation, for I am ever with most sincere esteem and affection,

Your's &c.,

JAMES THOMSON.

P. S. Please to make my compliments to Mrs. Mallet. I hope to see you soon in the country. If she deserts the country interest I shall be in despair.

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The following letter (a fragment unfortunately) was first printed by me in the "Illustrated London News" of the 10th of December, 1859. P. C.

RICHARD SAVAGE TO DAVID MALLET.

DEAR SIR, Twickenham, August 15, 1726.

I HAD long before now acknowledged your two last had I not been fatigued and unsettled; for I am truly sensible of y^c^ many undeserved favors which I owe your Friendship. As for your story of Massinissa, I still admire it, and am resolved to attempt it, tho' I have not yet begun. In one thing I was a little disappointed, for I was in Hopes that you wou'd have translated those speeches from Livy which you were once so kind as to read to me. Your Verses to Mr. Thomson are correctly wrote, finely imagined, and in a Word very generous and like your self.

> Where thy Power fails, unable to go on,
> Ambitious, greatly will the Good undone.

The Noble Spirit of those two Lines is peculiar to your own soul, and must have a charming Effect on all those, by whom a good Author wou'd wish to be read, as must also y^c^ four following Lines, where

you have set Fame in a most beautiful and alluring light—indeed, y^e^ whole Copy is of a piece; and it wou'd be wrong to point out any part as your finest where all is excellent, and I am sincerely of opinion that y^e^ Praise is by no means too high for y^e^ Person it is addressed to.

I have set my whole Thoughts on my Poem call'd The Misfortunes of humane Life, but find it very difficult to please my Self. I wish I cou'd be favour'd with some of your Thoughts on that subject. Since my rural retirement I have been visited by Dr. Young, who mentions you often with an affectionate and uncommon ardour. Mr. Pope has thrice done me y^e^ Favour of a Visit also, and entertained me very handsomely at his House. Mr. Dennis has also been with me, and staid three days. Mr. Hill has finished his affair, and by disposing of it to a company has secured an hundred thousand pounds to himself. On Fryday was se'nnight he set out in his own Coach and six to Scotland, with his Wife, and his Mother-in-Law accompanied him in her Chariot. The gold medal he has been presented with from y^e^ Czarina has no doubt been related to you by Mr. Thomson and by the Newspapers.

# PROSE DEDICATIONS TO THE EARLY EDITIONS OF WINTER, SUMMER, AND SPRING.

ALTHOUGH the subjoined Dedications, and the preface to the Second Edition of *Winter*, did not appear in any collected edition of *The Seasons*, they possess an interest which fully justifies their being reprinted here in chronological order.

The Dedication to *Winter* was prefixed to the First Edition, published 1726, and also to the four subsequent editions, all of which appeared before the expiration of 1728. It is as follows:—

## TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR SPENCER COMPTON.

SIR,

THE Author of the following Poem begs leave to inscribe this his first performance to your name, and patronage: unknown himself, and only introduced by the Muse, he yet ventures to approach you, with a modest cheerfulness: for, whoever attempts to excel in any generous art, though he comes alone, and unregarded by the world, may

hope for your notice, and esteem. Happy, if I can, in any degree, merit this good fortune: as every ornament and grace of polite learning is yours, your single approbation will be my fame.

I dare not indulge my heart, by dwelling on your public character; on that exalted honour, and integrity, which distinguish you, in that august assembly, where you preside; that unshaken loyalty to your sovereign, that disinterested concern for his people, which shine out, united, in all your behaviour, and finish the patriot. I am conscious of my want of strength and skill for so delicate an undertaking: and yet, as the shepherd in his cottage may feel and acknowledge the influence of the sun, with as lively a gratitude as the great man in his palace, even I may be allowed to publish my sense of those blessings, which, from so many powerful virtues, are derived to the nation they adorn.

I conclude with saying, that your fine discernment and humanity, in your private capacity, are so conspicuous, that, if this address is not received with some indulgence, it will be a severe conviction, that what I have written has not the least share of merit. I am, with the profoundest respect, Sir, your most devoted, and most faithful, humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

THE Second, Third, and Fourth Editions of *Winter* also contained this Preface:—

I AM neither ignorant, nor concerned, how much one may suffer in the opinion of several persons of great gravity and character, by the study and pursuit of Poetry.

Although there may seem to be some appearance of reason for the present contempt of it, as managed by the most part of our modern writers, yet that any man should, seriously, declare against that divine art is, really, amazing. It is declaring against the most charming power of imagination, the most exalting force of thought, the most affecting touch of sentiment; in a word, against the very soul of all learning, and politeness. It is affronting the universal taste of mankind, and declaring against what has charmed the listening world from Moses down to Milton. In fine, it is, even, declaring against the sublimest passages of the inspired writings themselves, and what seems to be the peculiar language of Heaven.

The truth of the case is this: these weak-sighted gentlemen cannot bear the strong light of Poetry, and the finer, and more amusing, scene of things it displays; but must those, therefore, whom heaven has blessed with the discerning eye shut it, to keep them company.

It is pleasant enough, however, to observe, frequently, in these enemies of Poetry, an awkward Imitation of it. They, sometimes, have their little brightnesses, when the opening glooms will permit.

Nay, I have seen their heaviness, on some occasions, deign to turn friskish, and witty, in which they make just such another figure as Æsop's Ass, when he began to fawn. To complete the absurdity, they would, even, in their efforts against Poetry, fain be poetical; like those gentlemen that reason, with a great deal of zeal and severity, against reason.

That there are frequent and notorious abuses of Poetry is as true as that the best things are most liable to that misfortune; but is there no end of that clamorous argument against the use of things from the abuse of them? and yet, I hope, that no man, who has the least sense of shame in him, will fall into it after the present, sulphurous, attacker of the stage.

To insist no further on this head, let poetry, once more, be restored to her ancient truth and purity; let her be inspired from heaven, and, in return, her incense ascend thither; let her exchange her low, venal, trifling, subjects for such as are fair, useful, and magnificent; and, let her execute these so as, at once, to please, instruct, surprise, and astonish: and then, of necessity, the most inveterate ignorance, and prejudice, shall be struck dumb; and poets, yet, become the delight and wonder, of mankind.

But this happy period is not to be expected, till some long-wished, illustrious man, of equal power, and beneficence, rise on the wintry world of letters: one of a genuine, and unbounded greatness and generosity of mind; who, far above all the pomp, and pride, of fortune, scorns the little addressful

flatterer; pierces through the disguised, designing villain; discountenances all the reigning fopperies of a tasteless age: and who, stretching his views into late futurity, has the true interest of virtue, learning, and mankind, entirely at heart—a character so nobly desirable that to an honest heart, it is, almost, incredible so few should have the ambition to deserve it.

Nothing can have a better influence towards the revival of Poetry than the choosing of great, and serious, subjects; such as, at once, amuse the fancy, enlighten the head, and warm the heart. These give a weight, and dignity, to the poem: nor is the pleasure, I should say rapture, both the writer, and the reader, feels, unwarranted by reason, or followed by repentant disgust. To be able to write on a dry, barren, theme, is looked upon, by some, as the sign of a happy, fruitful, Genius——fruitful indeed!—like one of the pendant gardens in Cheapside, watered, every morning, by the hand of the alderman, himself. And what are we commonly entertained with on these occasions, save forced, unaffecting, fancies; little glittering prettinesses; mixed terms of wit and expression, which are as widely different from native Poetry, as buffoonery is from the perfection of human thinking? A genius fired with the charms of truth, and nature, is tuned to a sublimer pitch, and scorns to associate with such subjects.

I cannot more emphatically recommend this poetical ambition than by the four following lines from Mr. Hill's Poem, called, the "Judgment Day," which is so singular an instance of it.

" For me, suffice it to have taught my Muse,
The tuneful Triflings of her tribe to shun;
And rais'd her warmth such heavenly themes to chuse,
As, in past ages, the best garlands won."

I know no subject more elevating, more amusing; more ready to awake the poetical enthusiasm, the philosophical reflection, and the moral sentiment, than the works of Nature. Where can we meet with such variety, such beauty, such magnificence? All that enlarges, and transports, the soul? What more inspiring than a calm, wide, survey of them? in every dress nature is greatly charming! whether she puts on the crimson robes of the morning! the strong effulgence of noon! the sober suit of the evening! or the deep sables of blackness, and tempest! How gay looks the Spring! how glorious the Summer! how pleasing the Autumn! and how venerable the Winter!—But there is no thinking of these things without breaking out into Poetry; which is, by-the-bye, a plain and undeniable argument of their superior excellence.

For this reason the best, both ancient, and modern, Poets have been passionately fond of retirement, and solitude. The wild romantic country was their delight. And they seem never to have been more happy, than when, lost in unfrequented fields, far from the little busy world, they were at leisure, to meditate, and sing the Works of Nature.

The book of Job, that noble and ancient poem, which, even, strikes so forcibly through a mangling translation, is crowned with a description of the grand works of Nature; and that, too, from the mouth of their Almigthy Author.

It was this devotion to the works of Nature that, in his Georgics, inspired the rural Virgil to write so inimitably; and who can forbear joining with him in this declaration of his, which has been the rapture of ages.

" Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musæ,
Quarum sacra fero ingenti perculsus amore,
Accipiant; cœlique vias et sidera monstrent,
Defectus solis varios, lunæque labores:
Unde tremor terris: qua vi maria alta tumescant
Obicibus ruptis, rursusque in seipsa residant:
Quid tantum oceano properent se tingere soles
Hyberni: vel quæ tardis mora noctibus obstet.
Sin, has ne possim naturæ accedere partes,
Frigidus obstiterit circum præcordia sanguis;
Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes
Flumina amem silvasque inglorius."

Which may be Englished thus:—

Me may the Muses, my supreme delight!
Whose priest I am, smit with immense desire,
Snatch to their care; the starry tracts disclose,
The sun's distress, the labours of the moon:
Whence the earth quakes: and by what force the deeps
Heave at the rocks, then on themselves reflow:
Why winter-suns to plunge in ocean speed:
And what retards the lazy summer-night.
But, least I should these mystic-truths attain,
If the cold current freezes round my heart,
The country me, the brooky vales may please
Mid woods, and streams, unknown.

I cannot put an end to this Preface, without taking the freedom to offer my most sincere, and grateful, acknowledgments to all those gentlemen who have given my first performance so favourable a reception.

It is with the blest pleasure, and a rising ambition, that I reflect on the honour Mr. Hill has

done me, in recommending my Poem to the world, after a manner so peculiar to himself; than whom, none approves, and obliges, with a nobler, and more unreserving, promptitude of soul. His favours are the very smiles of humanity; graceful, and easy; flowing from, and to, the heart. This agreeable train of thought awakens naturally in my mind all the other parts of his great, and amiable, character, which I know not well how to quit, and yet dare not here pursue.

Every reader, who has a heart to be moved, must feel the most gentle power of Poetry, in the lines, with which Mira has graced my Poem.

It perhaps, might be reckoned vanity, in me, to say how richly I value the approbation of a gentleman of Mr. Malloch's fine and exact taste, so justly dear and valuable, to all those that have the happiness of knowing him; and who, to say no more of him, will abundantly make good to the world, the early promise, his admired piece of "William and Margaret" has given.

I only wish my description of the various appearance of Nature in Winter, and, as I purpose, in the other Seasons, may have the good fortune, to give the reader some of that true pleasure, which they, in their agreeable succession, are, always, sure to inspire into my heart.

THE subjoined Dedication was printed in the First and Second Editions of *Summer*, which were issued in 1727 and 1728:—

## TO THE RIGHT HON. MR. DODINGTON,

ONE OF THE LORDS OF HIS MAJESTY'S TREASURY, &c.

SIR,

IT is not my purpose, in this address, to run into the common tract of dedicators, and attempt a panegyric which would prove ungrateful to you, too arduous for me, and superfluous with regard to the world. To you it would prove ungrateful, since there is a certain generous delicacy in men of the most distinguished merit, disposing them to avoid those praises they so powerfully attract. And when I consider that a character, in which the Virtues, the Graces, and the Muses join their influence, as much exceeds the expression of the most elegant and judicious pen, as the finished beauty does the representation of the pencil, I have the best reasons for declining such an arduous undertaking. As, indeed, it would be superfluous in itself; for what reader need to be told of those great abilities in the management of public affairs, and those amiable accomplishments in private life, which you so eminently possess. The general voice is loud in the praise of so many virtues, though posterity alone will do them justice. But may you, Sir, live long to illustrate your own fame by your own actions, and by them be transmitted to future times as the British Mæcenas!

Your example has recommended Poetry, with the greatest grace, to the admiration of those, who are engaged in the highest and most active scenes of life: and this, though confessedly the least considerable of those exalted qualities that dignify your character, must be particularly pleasing to one, whose only hope of being introduced to your regard is through the recommendation of an art in which you are a master.—But I forget what I have been declaring above, and must therefore turn my eyes to the following sheets. I am not ignorant that, when offered to your perusal, they are put into the hands of one of the finest, and consequently the most indulgent judges of the age: but as there is no mediocrity in Poetry, so there should be no limits to its ambition.—I venture directly on the trial of my fame.—If what I here present you has any merit to gain your approbation, I am not afraid of its success; and if it fails of your notice, I give it up to its just fate. This advantage at least I secure to myself, an occasion of thus publicly declaring that I am with the profoundest veneration, Sir, your most devoted, humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

THE First Edition of *Spring* was dedicated as follows:—

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS OF HERTFORD.

MADAM,

I HAVE always observed that, in addresses of this nature, the general taste of the world demands ingenious turns of wit, and disguised artful periods, instead of an open sincerity of sentiment flowing in a plain expression. From what secret impatience of the justest praise, when bestowed on others, this often proceeds, rather than a pretended delicacy, is beyond my purpose here to inquire. But as nothing is more foreign to the disposition of a soul sincerely pleased with the contemplation of what is beautiful, and excellent, than wit and turn; I have too much respect for your Ladyship's character, either to touch it in that gay, trifling manner, or venture on a particular detail of those truly amiable qualities of which it is composed. A mind exalted, pure, and elegant, a heart overflowing with humanity, and the whole train of virtues thence derived, that give a pleasing spirit to conversation, an engaging simplicity to the manners, and form the life to harmony, are rather to be felt, and silently admired, than expressed. I have attempted, in the following Poem, to paint some of the most tender beauties, and delicate appearances of Nature; how much in vain, your Ladyship's taste will, I am afraid, but too soon discover: yet would it still be a much easier task to find expression for all that variety of colour,

form, and fragrance, which enrich the season I describe, than to speak the many nameless graces, and native riches of a mind capable so much at once to relish solitude, and adorn society. To whom then could these sheets be more properly inscribed than to you, Madam, whose influence in the world can give them the protection they want, while your fine imagination, and intimate acquaintance with rural nature, will recommend them with the greatest advantage to your favourable notice? Happy! if I have hit any of those images, and correspondent sentiments, your calm evening walks, in the most delightful retirement, have oft inspired. I could add too, that as this Poem grew up under your encouragement, it has therefore a natural claim to your patronage. Should you read it with approbation, its music shall not droop; and should it have the good fortune to deserve your smiles, its roses shall not wither. But, where the subject is so tempting, lest I begin my Poem before the Dedication is ended, I here break short, and beg leave to subscribe myself, with the highest respect, Madam, your most obedient, humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.

## ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SEASONS AND THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

IN this reprint of Thomson's *Seasons* the Edition of 1746, the last which was issued during the Author's lifetime, has been followed, and such notes as a fair elucidation of the text seemed to demand have been added. *The Castle of Indolence* is here printed from the Second Edition, published in 1748, with a few additional notes and an enlargement of the Glossary.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK, PRINCE OF WALES,

This Poem,

CORRECTED AND MADE LESS UNWORTHY OF HIS

PROTECTION, IS, WITH THE UTMOST

GRATITUDE AND VENERATION,

INSCRIBED,

BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S MOST OBEDIENT AND

MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,

JAMES THOMSON.

*This Poem having been published several years ago, and considerable additions made to it lately, some little anachronisms have thence arisen which it is hoped the Reader will excuse.*

# SPRING.

## THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Inscribed to the Countess of Hartford. The Season is described as it affects the various parts of nature, ascending from the lower to the higher; and mixed with digressions arising from the subject. Its influence on inanimate matter, on vegetables, on brute animals, and last on Man; concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of Love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

# SPRING.

COME, gentle SPRING,—ethereal mildness, come;
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.
O Hartford,* fitted or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation joined
In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own season paints—when nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee.
And see where surly Winter passes off,
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:

* Frances, Countess of Hertford, daughter of the Honourable Henry Thynne. She married Algernon Seymour, Earl of Hertford, who succeeded to the Dukedom of Somerset in 1748. She died in 1754. The first edition of this poem contained a prose dedication to her.

His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The shattered forest, and the ravaged vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.
As yet the trembling year is unconfirmed,
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets
Deform the day delightless; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulfed,
To shake the sounding marsh; or, from the shore,
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.
At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
And the bright Bull receives him.* Then no more
The expansive atmosphere is cramped with cold;
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,
Fleecy, and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.
Forth fly the tepid Airs; and unconfined,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, the impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting nature, and his lusty steers
Drives from their stalls to where the well-used plough
Lies in the furrow, loosened from the frost.
There, unrefusing, to the harnessed yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheered by the simple song and soaring lark.
Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share
The Master leans, removes the obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

* In the latter end of April.

White, through the neighbouring fields the sower stalks
With measured step; and, liberal, throws the grain
Into the faithful bosom of the ground:
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.
Be gracious, Heaven! for now laborious man
Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend!
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year! Nor ye who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these last themes unworthy of your ear:
Such themes as these the rural Maro sung
To wide-imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by Greece refined.
In ancient times the sacred plough employed
The kings and awful fathers of mankind;
And some, with whom compared your insect-tribes
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scale of empire, ruled the storm
Of mighty war; then, with victorious hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seized
The plough, and, greatly independent, scorned
All the vile stores corruption can bestow.
Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough;
And o'er your hills and long withdrawing vales
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded! As the sea,
Far through his azure turbulent domain,
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports;
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour

O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
And be the exhaustless granary of a world!
  Nor only through the lenient air this change,
Delicious, breathes: the penetrative sun,
His force deep-darting to the dark retreat
Of vegetation, sets the steaming power
At large, to wander o'er the vernant earth
In various hues; but chiefly thee, gay green!
Thou smiling Nature's universal robe!
United light and shade! where the sight dwells
With growing strength and ever-new delight.
  From the moist meadow to the withered hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
And swells, and deepens, to the cherished eye.
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands displayed,
In full luxuriance, to the sighing gales;
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing concealed. At once, arrayed
In all the colours of the flushing year
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavish fragrance; while the promised fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceived,
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town,
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling
    drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of sweet-briar hedges I pursue my walk;
Or taste the smell of dairy; or ascend

Some eminence, Augusta,* in thy plains,
And see the country, far diffused around,
One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
Of mingled blossoms; where the raptured eye
Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

If, brushed from Russian wilds, a cutting gale
Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
The clammy mildew; or, dry-blowing, breathe
Untimely frost—before whose baleful blast
The full-blown Spring through all her foliage shrinks,
Joyless and dead, a wide-dejected waste.
For oft, engendered by the hazy north,
Myriads on myriads, insect armies waft
Keen in the poisoned breeze, and wasteful eat,
Through buds and bark, into the blackened core,
Their eager way. A feeble race, yet oft
The sacred sons of vengeance, on whose course
Corrosive famine waits, and kills the year.
To check this plague, the skilful farmer chaff
And blazing straw before his orchard burns;
Till, all involved in smoke, the latent foe
From every cranny suffocated falls;
Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dust
Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe;
Or, when the envenomed leaf begins to curl,
With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest:
Nor, while they pick them up with busy bill,
The little trooping birds unwisely scares.

Be patient, swains; these cruel-seeming winds
Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep, repressed,

* London. It was called Augusta by the Romans on account of its wealth and grandeur.

Those deepening clouds on clouds, surcharged with rain,
That, o'er the vast Atlantic hither borne,
In endless train, would quench the summer blaze,
And, cheerless, drown the crude unripened year.
The north-east spends his rage; and now, shut up
Within his iron caves, the effusive south
Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
Breathes the big clouds with vernal showers distent.
At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
Scarce staining ether; but by fast degrees,
In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
Along the loaded sky, and, mingling deep,
Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom;
Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
Oppressing life; but lovely, gentle, kind,
And full of every hope and every joy;
The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
Into a perfect calm; that not a breath
Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
Or rustling turn the many-twinkling leaves
Of aspin tall. The uncurling floods, diffused
In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
The falling verdure. Hushed in short suspense,
The plumy people streak their wings with oil,
To throw the lucid moisture, trickling, off;
And wait the approaching sign to strike, at once,
Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
And forests seem, impatient, to demand
The promised sweetness. Man superior walks

Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
And looking lively gratitude. At last,
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields,
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
In large effusion o'er the freshened world.
The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
By such as wander through the forest-walks,
Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.
But who can hold the shade while Heaven descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
And fruits, and flowers, on Nature's ample lap?
Swift fancy fired anticipates their growth;
And, while the milky nutriment distils,
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

Thus all day long the full-distended clouds
Indulge their genial stores, and well-showered earth
Is deep enriched with vegetable life;
Till, in the western sky, the downward sun
Looks out, effulgent, from amid the flush
Of broken clouds, gay-shifting to his beam.
The rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
The illumined mountain, through the forest streams,
Shakes on the floods, and in a yellow mist,
Far smoking o'er the interminable plain,
In twinkling myriads lights the dewy gems.
Moist, bright, and green, the landscape laughs around.
Full swell the woods; their every music wakes,
Mixed in wild concert, with the warbling brooks
Increased, the distant bleatings of the hills,
The hollow lows responsive from the vales,
Whence, blending all, the sweetened zephyr springs.

Meantime, refracted from yon eastern cloud,
Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow
Shoots up immense; and every hue unfolds
In fair proportion, running from the red
To where the violet fades into the sky.
Here, awful Newton, the dissolving clouds
Form, fronting on the sun, thy showery prism;
And to the sage-instructed eye unfold
The various twine of light, by thee disclosed
From the white mingling maze. Not so the swain:
He, wondering, views the bright enchantment bend,
Delightful, o'er the radiant fields, and runs
To catch the falling glory; but, amazed,
Beholds the amusive arch before him fly;
Then vanish quite away. Still night succeeds,
A softened shade, and saturated earth
Awaits the morning beam, to give to light,
Raised through ten thousand different plastic tubes,
The balmy treasures of the former day.

Then spring the lively herbs, profusely wild,
O'er all the deep-green earth, beyond the power
Of botanist to number up their tribes:
Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
In silent search; or through the forest, rank
With what the dull incurious weeds account,
Bursts his blind way; or climbs the mountain-rock,
Fired by the nodding verdure of its brow.
With such a liberal hand has nature flung
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds,
Innumerous mixed them with the nursing mould,
The moistening current, and prolific rain.

But who their virtues can declare? Who pierce
With vision pure, into these secret stores

Of health, and life, and joy? The food of man,
While yet he lived in innocence, and told
A length of golden years, unfleshed in blood,
A stranger to the savage arts of life,
Death, rapine, carnage, surfeit, and disease—
The lord, and not the tyrant, of the world.
The first fresh dawn then waked the gladdened race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blushed to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam;
For their light slumbers gently fumed away,
And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.
Meantime the song went round; and dance and sport,
Wisdom and friendly talk, successive stole
Their hours away. While in the rosy vale
Love breathed his infant sighs, from anguish free,
And full replete with bliss; save the sweet pain,
That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
Was known among these happy sons of heaven;
For reason and benevolence were law.
Harmonious Nature too looked smiling on.
Clear shone the skies, cooled with eternal gales,
And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
Dropped fatness down; as o'er the swelling mead
The herds and flocks, commixing, played secure.
This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
Was meekened, and he joined his sullen joy.
For music held the whole in perfect peace:
Soft sighed the flute; the tender voice was heard,

Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round
Applied their quire; and winds and waters flowed
In consonance. Such were those prime of days.
But now those white unblemished minutes, whence
The fabling poets took their golden age,
Are found no more amid these iron times—
These dregs of life! Now the distempered mind
Has lost that concord of harmonious powers,
Which forms the soul of happiness; and all
Is off the poise within: the passions all
Have burst their bounds; and reason half extinct,
Or impotent, or else approving, sees
The foul disorder. Senseless and deformed,
Convulsive anger storms at large; or, pale
And silent, settles into fell revenge.
Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full,
Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
Even love itself is bitterness of soul—
A pensive anguish pining at the heart;
Or, sunk to sordid interest, feels no more
That noble wish, that never-cloyed desire,
Which, selfish joy disdaining, seeks alone
To bless the dearer object of its flame.
Hope sickens with extravagance; and grief,
Of life impatient, into madness swells;
Or in dead silence wastes the weeping hours.
These, and a thousand mixed emotions more,
From ever-changing views of good and ill,
Formed infinitely various, vex the mind
With endless storm; whence, deeply rankling,
The partial thought, a listless unconcern,

Cold, and averting from our neighbour's good;
Then dark disgust and hatred, winding wiles,
Coward deceit, and ruffian violence.
At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless inhumanity pervades
And petrifies the heart. Nature disturbed
Is deemed, vindictive, to have changed her course.
Hence, in old dusky time, a deluge came:
When the deep-cleft disparting orb, that arched
The central waters round, impetuous rushed,
With universal burst, into the gulf,
And o'er the high-piled hills of fractured earth
Wide-dashed the waves, in undulation vast;
Till, from the centre to the streaming clouds,
A shoreless ocean tumbled round the globe.
The Seasons since have, with severer sway,
Oppressed a broken world: the Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows; and Summer shot
His pestilential heats. Great Spring, before,
Greened all the year; and fruits and blossoms blushed,
In social sweetness, on the self-same bough.
Pure was the temperate air; an even calm
Perpetual reigned; save what the zephyrs bland
Breathed o'er the blue expanse: for then nor storms
Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage;
Sound slept the waters; no sulphureous glooms
Swelled in the sky, and sent the lightning forth;
While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life.
But now, of turbid elements the sport,
From clear to cloudy tossed, from hot to cold,
And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,

Our drooping days are dwindled down to nought;
Their period finished ere 'tis well begun.
And yet the wholesome herb, neglected, dies;
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment, and health, and vital powers,
Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious blest.
For, with hot ravine fired, ensanguined man
Is now become the lion of the plain,
And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
Fierce drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
Nor wore her warming fleece; nor has the steer,
At whose strong chest the deadly tiger hangs,
E'er ploughed for him. They too are tempered high,
With hunger stung, and wild necessity;
Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
But man, whom Nature formed of milder clay,
With every kind emotion in his heart,
And taught alone to weep—while from her lap
She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain,
Or beams that gave them birth—shall he, fair form!
Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,
E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd,
And dip his tongue in gore? The beast of prey,
Blood-stained deserves to bleed: but you, ye flocks,
What have ye done; ye peaceful people, what,
To merit death? You, who have given us milk
In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat
Against the Winter's cold? And the plain ox,
That harmless, honest, guileless animal,
In what has he offended? He, whose toil,
Patient and ever ready, clothes the land
With all the pomp of harvest—shall he bleed,

And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands
Even of the clowns he feeds? And that, perhaps,
To swell the riot of the autumnal feast,
Won by his labour? This the feeling heart
Would tenderly suggest: but 'tis enough,
In this late age, adventurous, to have touched
Light on the numbers of the Samian Sage.*
High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
Whose wisest will has fixed us in a state
That must not yet to pure perfection rise:
Besides, who knows, how, raised to higher life,
From stage to stage, the vital scale ascends?

Now, when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
Swelled with the vernal rains, is ebbed away;
And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctured stream
Descends the billowy foam; now is the time,
While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,
To tempt the trout. The well-dissembled fly,
The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,
Snatched from the hoary steed the floating line,
And all thy slender watery stores, prepare.
But let not on thy hook the tortured worm,
Convulsive, twist in agonizing folds;
Which, by rapacious hunger swallowed deep,
Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast
Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,
Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

When, with his lively ray, the potent sun
Has pierced the streams, and roused the finny race,
Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair;
Chief should the western breezes curling play,

* Pythagoras.

And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.
High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks;
The next, pursue their rocky-channelled maze
Down to the river, in whose ample wave
Their little naiads love to sport at large.
Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mixed the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollowed bank,
Reverted, plays in undulating flow;
There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly;
And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Straight as above the surface of the flood
They wanton rise, or urged by hunger leap,
Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook;
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
And to the shelving shore slow dragging some,
With various hand proportioned to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceived,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoyed the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled infant throw. But should you lure
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendant trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly,
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud, he, desperate, takes the death,

With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthened line;
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
The caverned bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage;
Till floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandoned, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

Thus pass the temperate hours: but when the sun
Shakes from his noon-day throne the scattering clouds,
Even shooting listless languor through the deeps,
Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
Where scattered wild the lily of the vale
Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang
The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
With all the lowly children of the shade;
Or lie reclined beneath yon spreading ash,
Hung o'er the steep; whence, borne on liquid wing,
The sounding culver* shoots; or where the hawk,
High in the beetling cliff, his eyry builds.
There let the classic page thy fancy lead
Through rural scenes; such as the Mantuan swain
Paints in the matchless harmony of song;
Or catch thyself the landscape, gliding swift
Athwart imagination's vivid eye;
Or, by the vocal woods and waters lulled,

* The Rock Pigeon.—Columba *livia*.

And lost in lonely musing, in a dream,
Confused, of careless solitude, where mix
Ten thousand wandering images of things,
Soothe every gust of passion into peace—
All but the swellings of the softened heart,
That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.
Behold, yon breathing prospect bids the muse
Throw all her beauty forth. But who can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows? If fancy, then,
Unequal, fails beneath the pleasing task;
Ah, what shall language do? Ah, where find words
Tinged with so many colours; and whose power,
To life approaching, may perfume my lays
With that fine oil, those aromatic gales,
That inexhaustive flow continual round?
Yet, though successless, will the toil delight.
Come then, ye virgins and ye youths, whose hearts
Have felt the raptures of refining love;
And thou, Amanda,* come, pride of my song!
Formed by the graces, loveliness itself!
Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet,
Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul—
Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mixed,
Shines lively fancy, and the feeling heart:
Oh come! and while the rosy-footed May
Steals blushing on, together let us tread
The morning dews, and gather in their prime

* Miss Young, who married Vice-Admiral Campbell. See *Memoir*.

Fresh-blooming flowers, to grace thy braided hair,
And thy loved bosom that improves their sweets.
See, where the winding vale its lavish stores,
Irriguous, spreads. See, how the lily drinks
The latent rill, scarce oozing through the grass,
Of growth luxuriant; or the humid bank,
In fair profusion, decks. Long let us walk,
Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
Of blossomed beans. Arabia cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy than, liberal, thence
Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravished soul.
Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot;
Full of fresh verdure, and unnumbered flowers,
The negligence of nature, wide and wild;
Where, undisguised by mimic art, she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.
Here their delicious task the fervent bees,
In swarming millions, tend. Around, athwart,
Through the soft air, the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud, and, with inserted tube,
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul.
And oft, with bolder wing, they, soaring, dare
The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.
At length the finished garden to the view
Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.
Snatched through the verdant maze, the hurried eye
Distracted wanders; now the bowery walk
Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day
Falls on the lengthened gloom, protracted sweeps
Now meets the bending sky, the river now
Dimpling along, the breezy ruffled lake,
The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,

The ethereal mountain, and the distant main.
But why so far excursive? when at hand,
Along these blushing borders, bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,
Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace:
Throws out the snow-drop and the crocus first;
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumbered dyes;
The yellow wall-flower, stained with iron brown;
And lavish stock that scents the garden round.
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemonies; auriculas, enriched
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full ranunculus, of glowing red.
Then comes the tulip-race, where beauty plays
Her idle freaks: from family diffused
To family, as flies the father-dust,
The varied colours run; and, while they break
On the charmed eye, the exulting florist marks,
With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting; from the bud,
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes:
Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin-white,
Low-bent, and blushing inward; nor jonquils,
Of potent fragrance; nor narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad carnations; nor gay-spotted pinks;
Nor, showered from every bush, the damask-rose.
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.
Hail, Source of Beings! Universal Soul
Of heaven and earth! Essential Presence, hail!

To Thee I bend the knee; to Thee my thoughts,
Continual, climb; who, with a master-hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touched.
By Thee the various vegetative tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,
Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew.
By Thee disposed into congenial soils,
Stands each attractive plant, and sucks, and swells
The juicy tide—a twining mass of tubes.
At Thy command the vernal sun awakes
The torpid sap, detruded to the root
By wintry winds, that now in fluent dance,
And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumerous-coloured scene of things.

As rising from the vegetable world
My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend,
My panting muse; and hark, how loud the woods
Invite you forth in all your gayest trim.
Lend me your song, ye nightingales! oh pour
The mazy-running soul of melody
Into my varied verse! while I deduce,
From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame—the passion of the groves.

When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
Warm through the vital air, and on the heart
Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing;
And try again the long-forgotten strain,
At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
The soft infusion prevalent and wide,
Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
In music unconfined. Up-springs the lark,

Shrill-voiced and loud, the messenger of morn:
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And woodlark, o'er the kind-contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Poured out profusely, silent. Joined to these
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert: while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.

'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
That even to birds, and beasts, the tender arts
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First, wide around,
With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavouring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half-averted glance

Of their regardless charmer. Should she seem,
Softening, the least approvance to bestow,
Their colours burnish, and, by hope inspired,
They brisk advance; then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disordered; then again approach;
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods
They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts;
That Nature's great command may be obeyed;
Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive
Indulged in vain. Some to the holly-hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some;
Some to the rude protection of the thorn
Commit their feeble offspring. The cleft tree
Offers its kind concealment to a few,
Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
Others, apart, far in the grassy dale,
Or roughening waste, their humble texture weave.
But most in woodland solitudes delight,
In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
Whose murmurs soothe them all the live-long day,
When by kind duty fixed. Among the roots
Of hazel, pendent o'er the plaintive stream,
They frame the first foundation of their domes;
Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought
But restless hurry through the busy air,
Beat by unnumbered wings. The swallow sweeps
The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
Intent. And often, from the careless back

Of herds and flocks, a thousand tugging bills
Pluck hair and wool; and oft, when unobserved,
Steal from the barn a straw: till soft and warm,
Clean and complete, their habitation grows.
As thus the patient dam assiduous sits;
Not to be tempted from her tender task,
Or by sharp hunger, or by smooth delight,
Though the whole loosened spring around her blows.
Her sympathizing lover takes his stand
High on the opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
The tedious time away; nor else supplies
Her place a moment, while she sudden flits
To pick the scanty meal. The appointed time
With pious toil fulfilled, the callow young,
Warmed and expanded into perfect life,
Their brittle bondage break, and come to light;
A helpless family, demanding food
With constant clamour. Oh, what passions then,
What melting sentiments of kindly care,
On the new parents seize! Away they fly,
Affectionate, and, undesiring, bear
The most delicious morsel to their young,
Which equally distributed, again
The search begins. Even so a gentle pair,
By fortune sunk, but formed of generous mould,
And charmed with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
In some lone cot amid the distant woods,
Sustained alone by providential Heaven,
Oft, as they, weeping, eye their infant train,
Check their own appetites, and give them all.
Nor toil alone they scorn: exalting love,
By the great Father of the Spring inspired,
Gives instant courage to the fearful race,

And to the simple, art. With stealthy wing,
Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
Amid a neighbouring bush they silent drop,
And whirring thence, as if alarmed, deceive
The unfeeling schoolboy. Hence, around the head
Of wandering swain, the white-winged plover wheels
Her sounding flight, and then directly on
In long excursion skims the level lawn,
To tempt him from her nest. The wild-duck, hence,
O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
The heath-hen flutters, pious fraud! to lead
The hot pursuing spaniel far astray.

Be not the muse ashamed, here to bemoan
Her brothers of the grove, by tyrant man
Inhuman caught, and in the narrow cage
From liberty confined, and boundless air.
Dull are the pretty slaves, their plumage dull,
Ragged, and all its brightening lustre lost;
Nor is that sprightly wildness in their notes,
Which, clear and vigorous, warbles from the beech.
Oh then, ye friends of love and love-taught song,
Spare the soft tribes, this barbarous art forbear!
If on your bosom innocence can win,
Music engage, or piety persuade.

But let not chief the nightingale lament
Her ruined care, too delicately framed
To brook the harsh confinement of the cage.
Oft when, returning with her loaded bill,
The astonished mother finds a vacant nest,
By the hard hand of unrelenting clowns
Robbed, to the ground the vain provision falls;
Her pinions ruffle, and, low-drooping, scarce
Can bear the mourner to the poplar shade;

Where, all abandoned to despair, she sings
Her sorrows through the night; and, on the bough
Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain
Of winding woe, till, wide around, the woods
Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound.
But now the feathered youth their former bounds,
Ardent, disdain; and, weighing oft their wings,
Demand the free possession of the sky.
This one glad office more, and then dissolves
Parental love at once, now needless grown:
Unlavish wisdom never works in vain.
'Tis on some evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
When nought but balm is breathing through the woods,
With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
Visit the spacious heavens, and look abroad
On Nature's common, far as they can see,
Or wing their range and pasture. O'er the boughs
Dancing about, still at the giddy verge
Their resolution fails—their pinions still,
In loose libration stretched, to trust the void
Trembling refuse—till down before them fly
The parent guides, and chide, exhort, command,
Or push them off. The surging air receives
The plumy burden; and their self-taught wings
Winnow the waving element. On ground
Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
Farther and farther on, the lengthening flight;
Till, vanished every fear, and every power
Roused into life and action, light in air
The acquitted parents see their soaring race,
And, once rejoicing, never know them more.

High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
On utmost Kilda's* shore, whose lonely race
Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds,
The royal eagle draws his vigorous young,
Strong-pounced, and ardent with paternal fire.
Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
He drives them from his fort, the towering seat,
For ages, of his empire; which, in peace,
Unstained he holds, while many a league to sea
He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.
Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
Whose lofty elms and venerable oaks
Invite the rook, who, high amid the boughs,
In early Spring, his airy city builds,
And ceaseless caws amusive; there, well-pleased,
I might the various polity survey
Of the mixed household-kind. The careful hen
Calls all her chirping family around,
Fed and defended by the fearless cock,
Whose breast with ardour flames, as on he walks,
Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
The finely-checkered duck, before her train,
Rows garrulous. The stately-sailing swan
Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
And, arching proud his neck, with oary feet
Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier-isle,
Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
Loud-threatening, reddens; while the peacock
His every-coloured glory to the sun, [spreads
And swims in radiant majesty along.

* The farthest of the Western Islands of Scotland. T.

O'er the whole homely scene, the cooing dove
Flies thick in amorous chase, and wanton rolls
The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck.
While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world
Of brutes, below, rush furious into flame
And fierce desire. Through all his lusty veins
The bull, deep-scorched, the raging passion feels.
Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,
Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
Luxuriant shoot; or through the mazy wood
Dejected wanders, nor the inticing bud
Crops, though it presses on his careless sense.
And oft, in jealous maddening fancy wrapt,
He seeks the fight, and, idly-butting, feigns
His rival gored in every knotty trunk.
Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins:
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollowed earth,
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,
And groaning deep the impetuous battle mix;
While the fair heifer, balmy-breathing, near,
Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seized in every nerve,
Nor hears the rein, nor heeds the sounding thong;
Blows are not felt; but, tossing high his head,
And by the well-known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away;
O'er rocks, and woods, and craggy mountains flies;
And, neighing, on the aërial summit takes
The exciting gale; then, steep-descending, cleaves
The headlong torrents foaming down the hills,
Even where the madness of the straitened stream

Turns in black eddies round: such is the force
With which his frantic heart and sinews swell.
Nor undelighted by the boundless spring
Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep:
From the deep ooze and gelid cavern roused,
They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
Dire were the strain, and dissonant, to sing
The cruel raptures of the savage kind;
How by this flame their native wrath sublimed,
They roam, amid the fury of their heart,
The far-resounding waste in fiercer bands,
And growl their horrid loves. But this the theme
I sing, enraptured, to the British fair,
Forbids, and leads me to the mountain-brow,
Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf,
Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
This way and that convolved, in friskful glee,
Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
They start away, and sweep the massy mound
That runs around the hill; the rampart once
Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
When disunited Britain ever bled,
Lost in eternal broil: ere yet she grew
To this deep-laid indissoluble state,
Where wealth and commerce lift the golden head;
And, o'er our labours, liberty and law,
Impartial, watch—the wonder of a world!
What is this mighty breath, ye curious say,
That, in a powerful language, felt not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heaven; and through their
breast

These arts of love diffuses? What, but God?
Inspiring God! who, boundless spirit all,
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
He, ceaseless, works alone, and yet alone
Seems not to work; with such perfection framed
Is this complex, stupendous scheme of things.
But, though concealed, to every purer eye
The informing Author in his works appears:
Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes,
The Smiling God is seen; while water, earth,
And air attest his bounty; which exalts
The brute creation to this finer thought,
And, annual, melts their undesigning hearts
Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.
Still let my song a nobler note assume,
And sing the infusive force of Spring on man;
When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul.
Can he forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature? Can fierce passions vex his breast,
While every gale is peace, and every grove
Is melody? hence! from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves: away!
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, creative bounty burns,
With warmest beam; and on your open front
And liberal eye sits, from his dark retreat
Inviting modest Want. Nor, till invoked,
Can restless Goodness wait: your active search

Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplored;
Like silent-working heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
Life flows afresh; and young-eyed health exalts
The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still.
By swift degrees the love of nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last, sublimed
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world!
These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
Thy heart informed by reason's purer ray,
O Lyttelton,* the friend! thy passions thus
And meditations vary, as at large,
Courting the muse, through Hagley Park you stray;
Thy British Tempé! there along the dale,
With woods o'erhung, and shagged with mossy rocks,
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthened vista through the trees,

* George Lord Lyttelton, son of Sir Thomas Lyttelton of Hagley Park, Worcestershire. He was born in 1709, created a peer in 1757, and died in 1773.

You silent steal; or sit beneath the shade
Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts
Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
And pensive listen to the various voice
Of rural peace: the herds, the flocks, the birds,
The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,
That, purling down amid the twisted roots
Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
On the soothed ear. From these abstracted oft,
You wander through the philosophic world;
Where in bright train continual wonders rise,
Or to the curious or the pious eye.
And oft, conducted by historic truth,
You tread the long extent of backward time:
Planning, with warm benevolence of mind
And honest zeal unwarped by party rage,
Britannia's weal; how from the venal gulf
To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.
Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
The muses charm; while, with sure taste refined,
You draw the inspiring breath of ancient song,
Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
Perhaps thy loved Lucinda* shares thy walk,
With soul to thine attuned. Then Nature all
Wears to the lover's eye a look of love;
And all the tumult of a guilty world,
Tossed by ungenerous passions, sinks away.
The tender heart is animated peace;
And as it pours its copious treasures forth,
In varied converse, softening every theme,

* Miss Lucy Fortescue, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, Esq. of Filleigh, Devon. She was married to Mr. Lyttelton in 1742, and died in 1747.

You, frequent-pausing, turn, and from her eyes,
Where meekened sense, and amiable grace,
And lively sweetness dwell, enraptured drink
That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,
Inimitable happiness! which love
Alone bestows, and on a favoured few.
Meantime you gain the height; from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads immense around;
And snatched o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,
And verdant field, and darkening heath between,
And villages embosomed soft in trees,
And spiry towns by surging columns marked
Of household smoke, your eye, excursive, roams;
Wide-stretching from the hall, in whose kind haunt
The hospitable genius lingers still,
To where the broken landscape, by degrees
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills;
O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky, rise.

Flushed by the spirit of the genial year,
Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
Shoots, less and less, the live carnation round;
Her lips blush deeper sweets; she breathes of youth;
The shining moisture swells into her eyes
In brighter flow; her wishing bosom heaves
With palpitations wild; kind tumults seize
Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love.
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair!
Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts:
Dare not the infectious sigh; the pleading look,
Downcast and low, in meek submission dressed,

But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth,
Gain on your purposed will. Nor in the bower
Where woodbines flaunt and roses shed a couch,
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.

And let the aspiring youth beware of love,
Of the smooth glance beware; for 'tis too late,
When on his heart the torrent-softness pours.
Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away; while the fond soul,
Wrapt in gay visions of unreal bliss,
Still paints the illusive form, the kindling grace,
The inticing smile, the modest-seeming eye,
Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying Heaven,
Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death:
And still, false-warbling in his cheated ear,
Her siren voice, enchanting, draws him on
To guileful shores and meads of fatal joy.

Even present, in the very lap of love
Inglorious laid—while music flows around,
Perfumes, and oils, and wine, and wanton hours—
Amid the roses, fierce repentance rears
Her snaky crest: a quick-returning pang
Shoots through the conscious heart; where honour still,
And great design, against the oppressive load
Of luxury, by fits, impatient heave.

But absent, what fantastic woes, aroused,
Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,
Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life!
Neglected fortune flies; and, sliding swift,
Prone into ruin fall his scorned affairs.

'Tis nought but gloom around. The darkened sun
Loses his light. The rosy-bosomed Spring
To weeping fancy pines; and yon bright arch,
Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.
All nature fades extinct; and she alone
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.
Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends;
And sad amid the social band he sits,
Lonely and unattentive. From the tongue
The unfinished period falls: while borne away,
On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
To the vain bosom of his distant fair;
And leaves the semblance of a lover, fixed
In melancholy site, with head declined,
And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
Shook from his tender trance, and, restless, runs
To glimmering shades and sympathetic glooms,
Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream,
Romantic, hangs; there through the pensive dusk
Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,
Indulging all to love; or on the bank
Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
Thus in soft anguish he consumes the day,
Nor quits his deep retirement, till the moon
Peeps through the chambers of the fleecy east,
Enlightened by degrees, and in her train
Leads on the gentle hours; then forth he walks,
Beneath the trembling languish of her beam,
With softened soul, and woos the bird of eve
To mingle woes with his; or, while the world
And all the sons of care lie hushed in sleep,

Associates with the midnight shadows drear;
And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours
His idly-tortured heart into the page
Meant for the moving messenger of love;
Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
With rising frenzy fired. But if on bed
Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies.
All night he tosses, nor the balmy power
In any posture finds; till the grey morn
Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch,
Exanimate by love: and then perhaps
Exhausted nature sinks a while to rest,
Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
That o'er the sick imagination rise,
And in black colours paint the mimic scene.
Oft with the enchantress of his soul he talks;
Sometimes in crowds distressed; or, if retired
To secret-winding flower-enwoven bowers,
Far from the dull impertinence of man,
Just as he, credulous, his endless cares
Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
Snatched from her yielded hand, he knows not how,
Through forests huge, and long untravelled heaths
With desolation brown, he wanders waste,
In night and tempest wrapt; or shrinks aghast,
Back from the bending precipice; or wades
The turbid stream below, and strives to reach
The farther shore, where, succourless and sad,
She with extended arms his aid implores,
But strives in vain: borne by the outrageous flood
To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
Or, whelmed beneath the boiling eddy, sinks.
These are the charming agonies of love,

Whose misery delights. But through the heart
Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
'Tis then delightful misery no more,
But agony unmixed, incessant gall,
Corroding every thought, and blasting all
Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then,
Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
Farewell! ye gleamings of departed peace,
Shine out your last! the yellow-tinging plague
Internal vision taints, and in a night
Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
Ah! then, instead of love-enlivened cheeks,
Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes
With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed,
Suffused and glaring with untender fire,
A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek,
Where the whole poisoned soul, malignant, sits,
And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views
Of horrid rivals, hanging on the charms
For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
With fervent anguish and consuming rage.
In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,
Deceitful pride, and resolution frail,
Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours,
Afresh, her beauties on his busy thought;
Her first endearments twining round the soul
With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew,
Flames through the nerves, and boils along the veins;
While anxious doubt distracts the tortured heart:
For even the sad assurance of his fears
Were peace to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,

Whom love deludes into his thorny wilds,
Through flowery-tempting paths, or leads a life
Of fevered rapture, or of cruel care;
His brightest aims extinguished all, and all
His lively moments running down to waste.
But happy they! the happiest of their kind!
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where friendship full-exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem enlivened by esire
Ineffable and sympathy of soul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence: for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
The loathing virgin, in eternal care,
Well-merited, consume his nights and days;
Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love
Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel;
Let eastern tyrants from the light of heaven
Seclude their bosom-slaves, meanly possessed
Of a mere lifeless, violated form:
While those whom love cements in holy faith
And equal transport, free as Nature live,
Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all!
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish;

Something than beauty dearer, should they look
Or on the mind, or mind-illumined face—
Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven.
Meantime a smiling offspring rises round,
And mingles both their graces. By degrees,
The human blossom blows; and every day,
Soft as it rolls along, shows some new charm—
The father's lustre, and the mother's bloom.
Then infant reason grows apace, and calls
For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot,
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Oh, speak the joy! ye, whom the sudden tear
Surprises often, while you look around,
And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss;
All various Nature pressing on the heart—
An elegant sufficiency, content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven!
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love;
And thus their moments fly. The Seasons thus,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
Still find them happy; and consenting Spring
Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads:
Till Evening comes at last, serene and mild;
When after the long vernal day of life,
Enamoured more, as more remembrance swells

With many a proof of recollected love,
Together down they sink, in social sleep;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

# SUMMER.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Invocation. Address to Mr. Dodington. An introductory reflection on the motion of the heavenly bodies; whence the succession of the Seasons. As the face of nature in this season is almost uniform, the progress of the poem is a description of a Summer's day. The dawn. Sun-rising. Hymn to the sun. Forenoon. Summer insects described. Hay-making. Sheep-shearing. Noonday. A woodland retreat. Group of herds and flocks. A solemn grove: how it affects a contemplative mind. A cataract, and rude scene. View of Summer in the torrid zone. Storm of thunder and lightning. A tale. The storm over. A serene afternoon. Bathing. Hour of walking. Transition to the prospect of a rich, well cultivated country; which introduces a panegyric on Great Britain. Sunset. Evening. Night. Summer meteors. A comet. The whole concluding with the praise of philosophy.

## SUMMER.

FROM brightening fields of ether fair-disclosed,
Child of the sun, refulgent SUMMER comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through nature's depth:
He comes, attended by the sultry hours
And ever fanning breezes, on his way;
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushful face; and earth and skies,
All-smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.
Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom:
And on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.
Come, inspiration! from thy hermit-seat,
By mortal seldom found: may fancy dare,
From thy fixed serious eye, and raptured glance

Shot on surrounding heaven, to steal one look
Creative of the poet, every power
Exalting to an ecstacy of soul.
And thou, my youthful muse's early friend,
In whom the human graces all unite;
Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart;
Genius, and wisdom; the gay social sense,
By decency chastised; goodness and wit,
In seldom-meeting harmony combined;
Unblemished honour, and an active zeal
For Britain's glory, liberty, and man:
O Dodington! * attend my rural song,
Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line,
And teach me to deserve thy just applause.
With what an awful world-revolving power
Were first the unwieldy planets launched along
The illimitable void! thus to remain,
Amid the flux of many thousand years,
That oft has swept the toiling race of men
And all their laboured monuments away,
Firm, unremitting, matchless, in their course;
To the kind-tempered change of night and day,
And of the Seasons ever stealing round,
Minutely faithful: such the All-perfect Hand
That poised, impels, and rules the steady whole.
When now no more the alternate Twins are fired,
And Cancer reddens with the solar blaze,
Short is the doubtful empire of the night;
And soon, observant of approaching day,

* The Right Honourable George Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe.—These lines (21—31) were substituted in the second and subsequent editions of this poem for a prose dedication prefixed to the first edition.

The meek-eyed morn appears—mother of dews,
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east;
Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow,
And, from before the lustre of her face,
White break the clouds away. With quickened step,
Brown night retires. Young day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.
Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, awkward; while along the forest glade
The wild deer trip, and, often turning, gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes
The native voice of undissembled joy;
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.
Roused by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells;
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.
  Falsely luxurious! will not man awake;
And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due, and sacred song?
For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise?
To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
The fleeting moments of too short a life—
Total extinction of the enlightened soul!
Or else, to feverish vanity alive,
Wildered, and tossing through distempered dreams!
Who would in such a gloomy state remain
Longer than nature craves; when every muse
And every blooming pleasure wait without,

To bless the wildly-devious morning-walk?
  But yonder comes the powerful king of day,
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
Illumed with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth and coloured air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad;
And sheds the shining day, that burnished plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,
High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, Light!
Of all material beings first, and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom; and thou, O sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of thee?
  'Tis by thy secret, strong, attractive force,
As with a chain indissoluble bound,
Thy system rolls entire; from the far bourne
Of utmost Saturn, wheeling wide his round
Of thirty years, to Mercury, whose disk
Can scarce be caught by philosophic eye,
Lost in the near effulgence of thy blaze.
  Informer of the planetary train!
Without whose quickening glance their cumbrous orbs
Were brute unlovely mass, inert and dead,
And not, as now, the green abodes of life;
How many forms of being wait on thee,
Inhaling spirit; from the unfettered mind,
By thee sublimed, down to the daily race,
The mixing myriads of thy setting beam.

The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of Seasons! who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic-road,
In world-rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Meantime the expecting nations, circled gay
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send, grateful, up
A common hymn: while, round thy beaming car,
High-seen, the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy-fingered hours,
The zephyrs floating loose, the timely rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed dews,
And, softened into joy, the surly storms.
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flushed the vernal year.
Nor to the surface of enlivened earth,
Graceful with hills and dales, and leafy woods,
Her liberal tresses, is thy force confined;
But, to the bowelled cavern darting deep,
The mineral kinds confess thy mighty power.
Effulgent, hence the veiny marble shines;
Hence labour draws his tools; hence burnished war
Gleams on the day; the nobler works of peace
Hence bless mankind; and generous commerce
The round of nations in a golden chain. [binds
The unfruitful rock itself, impregned by thee,
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively diamond drinks thy purest rays,
Collected light, compact; that, polished bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,

Dares, as it sparkles on the fair one's breast,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.
At thee the ruby lights its deepening glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the sapphire,—solid ether—takes
Its hue cerulean; and, of evening tinct,
The purple-streaming amethyst is thine.
With thy own smile the yellow topaz burns;
Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,
When first she gives it to the southern gale,
Than the green emerald shows. But, all combined,
Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several from its surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues,
As the sight varies in the gazer's hand.

The very dead creation, from thy touch,
Assumes a mimic life. By thee refined,
In brighter mazes, the relucent stream
Plays o'er the mead. The precipice abrupt,
Projecting horror on the blackened flood,
Softens at thy return. The desert joys,
Wildly, through all his melancholy bounds.
Rude ruins glitter; and the briny deep,
Seen from some pointed promontory's top,
Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge,
Restless, reflects a floating gleam. But this,
And all the much-transported muse can sing,
Are to thy beauty, dignity, and use,
Unequal far—great delegated source
Of light, and life, and grace, and joy below!

How shall I then attempt to sing of Him,
Who, Light Himself! in uncreated light
Invested deep, dwells awfully retired

From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken;
Whose single smile has, from the first of time,
Filled, overflowing, all those lamps of heaven,
That beam for ever through the boundless sky:
But, should He hide his face, the astonished sun,
And all the extinguished stars, would, loosening, reel
Wide from their spheres, and chaos come again.

And yet was every faltering tongue of man,
Almighty Father! silent in thy praise,
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice;
Even in the depth of solitary woods,
By human foot untrod, proclaim thy power,
And to the quire celestial Thee resound,
The eternal cause, support, and end of all!

To me be Nature's volume broad displayed;
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage, raptured, to translate,
My sole delight; as through the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn
On Fancy's eagle-wing excursive soar.

Now, flaming up the heavens, the potent sun
Melts into limpid air the high-raised clouds,
And morning fogs, that hovered round the hills
In party-coloured bands; till wide unveiled
The face of nature shines, from where earth seems,
Far-stretched around, to meet the bending sphere.

Half in a blush of clustering roses lost,
Dew-dropping coolness to the shade retires;
There, on the verdant turf, or flowery bed,
By gelid founts and careless rills to muse;
While tyrant heat, dispreading through the sky,
With rapid sway, his burning influence darts

On man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream.
Who can, unpitying, see the flowery race,
Shed by the morn, their new-flushed bloom resign,
Before the parching beam? so fade the fair,
When fevers revel through their azure veins.
But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamoured bosom to his ray.
Home, from his morning task, the swain retreats;
His flock before him stepping to the fold:
While the full-uddered mother lows around
The cheerful cottage, then expecting food—
The food of innocence and health! The daw,
The rook, and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks
(That the calm village in their verdant arms,
Sheltering, embrace) direct their lazy flight;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embowered,
All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene;
And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The house-dog, with the vacant greyhound, lies,
Out-stretched and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
O'er hill and dale; till, wakened by the wasp,
They starting snap. Nor shall the muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer race
Live in her lay, and flutter through her song;
Not mean though simple: to the sun allied,
From him they draw their animating fire.
Waked by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come winged abroad; by the light air upborne,
Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink

And secret corner, where they slept away
The wintry storms; or, rising from their tombs
To higher life, by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they pour; of all the varied hues
Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose.
Ten thousand forms, ten thousand different tribes!
People the blaze. To sunny waters some
By fatal instinct fly; where on the pool
They, sportive, wheel: or, sailing down the stream,
Are snatched immediate by the quick-eyed trout,
Or darting salmon. Through the green-wood glade
Some love to stray; there lodged, amused, and fed,
In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make
The meads their choice, and visit every flower,
And every latent herb: for the sweet task,
To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
In what soft beds, their young, yet undisclosed,
Employs their tender care. Some to the house,
The fold, and dairy, hungry, bend their flight;
Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese:
Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
They meet their fate; or, weltering in the bowl,
With powerless wings around them wrapt, expire.

But chief to heedless flies the window proves
A constant death; where, gloomily retired,
The villain spider lives, cunning and fierce,
Mixture abhorred! amid a mangled heap
Of carcasses, in eager watch he sits,
O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
Near the dire cell the dreadless wanderer oft
Passes; as oft the ruffian shows his front.
The prey at last ensnared, he, dreadful, darts,
With rapid glide, along the leaning line;

And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
Strikes backward, grimly pleased: the fluttering
And shriller sound declare extreme distress, [wing
And ask the helping hospitable hand.
Resounds the living surface of the ground:
Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum,
To him who muses through the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclined,
With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade
Of willows grey, close crowding o'er the brook.
Gradual, from these what numerous kinds de-
Evading even the microscopic eye! [scend.
Full nature swarms with life; one wondrous mass
Of animals, or atoms organized,
Waiting the vital breath, when Parent-Heaven
Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen,
In putrid streams, emits the living cloud
Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
Where searching sunbeams scarce can find a way,
Earth animated heaves. The flowery leaf
Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure,
Within its winding citadel, the stone
Holds multitudes. But chief the forest boughs,
That dance unnumbered to the playful breeze,
The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible
Amid the floating verdure, millions stray.
Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,

Though one transparent vacancy it seems,
Void of their unseen people. These, concealed
By the kind art of forming Heaven, escape
The grosser eye of man: for, if the worlds
In worlds inclosed should on his senses burst,
From cates ambrosial, and the nectared bowl,
He would abhorrent turn; and in dead night,
When Silence sleeps o'er all, be stunned with noise.
Let no presuming impious railer tax
Creative Wisdom, as if aught was formed
In vain, or not for admirable ends.
Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce
His works unwise, of which the smallest part
Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?
As if upon a full proportioned dome,
On swelling columns heaved, the pride of art!
A critic fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
Should dare to tax the structure of the whole.
And lives the man, whose universal eye
Has swept at once the unbounded scheme of things;
Marked their dependance so, and firm accord,
As with unfaltering accent to conclude
That this availeth nought? Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
From Infinite Perfection to the brink
Of dreary nothing,—desolate abyss!
From which astonished thought, recoiling, turns?
Till then, alone let zealous praise ascend,
And hymns of holy wonder, to that Power,
Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds,
As on our smiling eyes his servant-sun.
Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,

Upward and downward, thwarting and convolved,
The quivering nations sport; 'till, tempest-winged,
Fierce winter sweeps them from the face of day.
Even so luxurious men, unheeding, pass
An idle summer life in fortune's shine,—
A season's glitter! Thus they flutter on
From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead:
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer-rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half-naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
Even stooping age is here; and infant-hands
Trail the long rake, or with the fragrant load
O'ercharged, amid the kind oppression roll.
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread the breathing harvest to the sun
That throws refreshful round a rural smell;
Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
In order gay: while, heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compelled, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.

Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft, fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some, impatient, seizing, hurls them in:
Emboldened then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast, they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And, panting, labour to the farther shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-washed fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt,
The trout is banished by the sordid stream;
Heavy, and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturbed, and wondering what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill; and, tossed from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gathered flocks
Are in the wattled pen, innumerous, pressed,
Head above head; and, ranged in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round.
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthroned,
Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace:
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some,
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;

Others the unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns the indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
By needy man,—that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb, complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrowed your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

A simple scene! yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise: hence she commands
The exalted stores of every brighter clime;
The treasures of the sun without his rage:
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land: her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, even now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

'Tis raging noon; and, vertical, the sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns; and all,
From pole to pole, is undistinguished blaze.
In vain the sight, dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief; thence hot-ascending steams
And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parched, the cleaving fields
And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,

Blast fancy's blooms, and wither even the soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound
Of sharpening scythe: the mower, sinking, heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfumed;
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful nature pants.
The very streams look languid from afar;
Or, through the unsheltered glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.

All-conquering heat, oh, intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples, potent thus,
Beam not so fierce! incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,
Poured on the head profuse. In vain I sigh,
And restless turn, and look around for night:
Night is far off; and hotter hours approach.
Thrice-happy he, who on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crowned,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines;
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought
And fresh bedewed with ever-spouting streams,
Sits coolly calm; while all the world without,
Unsatisfied and sick, tosses in noon.
Emblem instructive of the virtuous man,
Who keeps his tempered mind serene and pure,
And every passion aptly harmonized,
Amid a jarring world with vice inflamed.

Welcome, ye shades! ye bowery thickets, hail!
Ye lofty pines! ye venerable oaks!
Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep!
Delicious is your shelter to the soul,
As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,
Or stream full-flowing, that his swelling sides

Laves, as he floats along the herbaged brink. [glides;
Cool, through the nerves, your pleasing comfort
The heart beats glad; the fresh-expanded eye
And ear resume their watch; the sinews knit;
And life shoots swift through all the lightened limbs.
Around the adjoining brook that purls along
The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,
Now scarcely moving through a reedy pool,
Now starting to a sudden stream, and now
Gently diffused into a limpid plain,
A various group the herds and flocks compose.
Rural confusion! On the grassy bank
Some ruminating lie; while others stand
Half in the flood, and, often bending, sip
The circling surface. In the middle droops
The strong laborious ox, of honest front,
Which, incomposed, he shakes; and from his sides
The troublous insects lashes with his tail,
Returning still. Amid his subjects safe,
Slumbers the monarch-swain; his careless arm
Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustained:
Here laid his scrip, with wholesome viands filled;
There, listening every noise, his watchful dog.
Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight
Of angry gad-flies fasten on the herd;
That startling scatters from the shallow brook,
In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,
They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain
Through all the bright severity of noon;
While, from their labouring breasts, a hollow moan,
Proceeding, runs low-bellowing round the hills.
Oft in this season, too, the horse, provoked,
While his big sinews full of spirits swell,

Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,
Springs the high fence; and, o'er the field effused,
Darts on the gloomy flood, with steadfast eye,
And heart estranged to fear: his nervous chest,
Luxuriant and erect, the seat of strength,
Bears down the opposing stream; quenchless his
He takes the river at redoubled draughts; [thirst.
And with wide nostrils, snorting, skims the wave.
Still let me pierce into the midnight depth
Of yonder grove, of wildest, largest growth;
That, forming high in air a woodland quire,
Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
Solemn and slow, the shadows blacker fall,
And all is awful listening gloom around.
These are the haunts of meditation, these
The scenes where ancient bards the inspiring breath,
Ecstatic, felt; and, from this world retired,
Conversed with angels and immortal forms,
On gracious errands bent: to save the fall
Of virtue struggling on the brink of vice;
In waking whispers and repeated dreams,
To hint pure thought, and warn the favoured soul,
For future trials fated, to prepare;
To prompt the poet, who, devoted, gives
His muse to better themes; to soothe the pangs
Of dying worth, and from the patriot's breast
(Backward to mingle in detested war,
But foremost when engaged) to turn the death;
And numberless such offices of love,
Daily and nightly, zealous to perform.
Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
Or stalk majestic on. Deep-roused, I feel

A sacred terror, a severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,
A voice, than human more, the abstracted ear
Of fancy strikes. "Be not of us afraid,
"Poor kindred man! thy fellow-creatures, we
"From the same Parent-Power our beings drew;
"The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
"Once some of us, like thee, through stormy life,
"Toiled, tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
"This holy calm, this harmony of mind,
"Where purity and peace immingle charms.
"Then fear not us; but with responsive song,
"Amid these dim recesses, undisturbed
"By noisy folly and discordant vice,
"Of nature sing with us, and nature's God.
"Here frequent, at the visionary hour,
"When musing midnight reigns, or silent noon,
"Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
"And voices chanting from the wood-crowned hill,
"The deepening dale, or inmost sylvan glade;
"A privilege bestowed by us, alone,
"On contemplation, or the hallowed ear
"Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain."
And art thou, Stanley,* of that sacred band?
Alas, for us too soon!—though raised above
The reach of human pain, above the flight
Of human joy; yet, with a mingled ray
Of sadly pleased remembrance, must thou feel
A mother's love, a mother's tender woe;
Who seeks thee still, in many a former scene;
Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely beaming eyes,

* A young lady well known to the author, who died at the age of eighteen, in the year 1738.—T.

Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
Inspired; where moral wisdom mildly shone
Without the toil of art, and virtue glowed
In all her smiles, without forbidding pride.
But, O thou best of parents! wipe thy tears;
Or rather to parental Nature pay
The tears of grateful joy, who, for a while,
Lent thee this younger self, this opening bloom
Of thy enlightened mind and gentle worth.
Believe the muse: the wintry blast of death
Kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread,
Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns,
Through endless ages, into higher powers.
Thus up the mount, in airy vision rapt,
I stray, regardless whither; till the sound
Of a near fall of water every sense [back,
Wakes from the charm of thought: swift-shrinking
I check my steps, and view the broken scene.
Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood
Rolls fair and placid; where, collected all
In one impetuous torrent, down the steep
It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
Then whitening by degrees, as prone it falls,
And from the loud-resounding rocks below
Dashed in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.
Nor can the tortured wave here find repose:
But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
Now flashes o'er the scattered fragments, now
Aslant the hollow channel rapid darts;
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild infracted course and lessened roar,

It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last,
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.
  Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,
With upward pinions, through the flood of day;
And, giving full his bosom to the blaze,
Gains on the sun; while all the tuneful race,
Smit by afflictive noon, disordered droop,
Deep in the thicket; or, from bower to bower
Responsive, force an interrupted strain.
The stock-dove only through the forest coocs,
Mournfully hoarse; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe! again
The sad idea of his murdered mate,
Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
Across his fancy comes; and then resounds
A louder song of sorrow through the grove.
  Beside the dewy border let me sit,
All in the freshness of the humid air:
There on that hollowed rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lined, and over head
By flowering umbrage shaded; where the bee
Strays diligent, and with the extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.
  Now, while I taste the sweetness of the shade,
While nature lies around deep-lulled in noon,
Now come, bold fancy, spread a daring flight,
And view the wonders of the torrid zone.
Climes unrelenting! with whose rage compared,
Yon blaze is feeble, and yon skies are cool.
  See, how at once the bright effulgent sun,
Rising direct, swift chases from the sky
The short-lived twilight; and with ardent blaze

Looks gaily fierce o'er all the dazzling air:
He mounts his throne; but, kind, before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn,
The general breeze,* to mitigate his fire,
And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.
Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crowned
And barbarous wealth, that see, each circling year,
Returning suns and double seasons† pass:
Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator, ridgy, rise,
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays;
Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,
Stage above stage, high waving o'er the hills;
Or to the far horizon wide-diffused,
A boundless deep immensity of shade.
Here lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
The noble sons of potent heat and floods
Prone-rushing from the clouds, rear high to heaven
Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
Meridian gloom. Here, in eternal prime,
Unnumbered fruits of keen delicious taste
And vital spirit, drink, amid the cliffs
And burning sands that bank the shrubby vales,
Redoubled day, yet in their rugged coats
A friendly juice, to cool its rage, contain.
Bear me, Pomona! to thy citron groves;
To where the lemon and the piercing lime,

* Which blows constantly between the tropics from the east, or the collateral points, the north-east and south-east; caused by the pressure of the rarefied air on that before it, according to the diurnal motion of the sun from east to west.—T.

† In all places between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year perpendicular, which produces this effect.—T.

With the deep orange, glowing through the green,
Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclined
Beneath the spreading tamarind that shakes,
Fanned by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.
Deep in the night the massy locust sheds,
Quench my hot limbs; or lead me through the maze,
Embowering endless, of the Indian fig;
Or, thrown at gayer ease, on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cooled,
Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,
And high palmetos lift their graceful shade.
Oh, stretched amid these orchards of the sun,
Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
And from the palm to draw its freshening wine;
More bounteous far than all the frantic juice
Which Bacchus pours. Nor, on its slender twigs
Low-bending, be the full pomegranate scorned;
Nor, creeping through the woods, the gelid race
Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells
Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
Witness, thou best anana, thou the pride
Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
The poets imaged in the golden age:
Quick let me strip thee of thy tufty coat,
Spread thy ambrosial stores, and feast with Jove!
From these the prospect varies. Plains immense
Lie stretched below, interminable meads
And vast savannahs, where the wandering eye,
Unfixed, is in a verdant ocean lost.
Another Flora there, of bolder hues,
And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride,
Plays o'er the fields, and showers with sudden hand
Exuberant spring: for oft these valleys shift

Their green embroidered robe to fiery brown,
And swift to green again, as scorching suns
Or streaming dews and torrent rains prevail.
Along these lonely regions, where, retired
From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
In awful solitude, and naught is seen
But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
Prodigious rivers roll their fattening seas;
On whose luxuriant herbage, half-concealed,
Like a fallen cedar, far diffused his train,
Cased in green scales, the crocodile extends.
The flood disparts: behold! in plaited mail
Behemoth* rears his head. Glanced from his side,
The darted steel in idle shivers flies:
He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills;
Where, as he crops his varied fare, the herds,
In widening circle round, forget their food,
And at the harmless stranger wondering gaze.
  Peaceful, beneath primeval trees that cast
Their ample shade o'er Niger's yellow stream,
And where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave;
Or, mid the central depth of blackening woods,
High-raised in solemn theatre around,
Leans the huge elephant; wisest of brutes!
Oh truly wise; with gentle might endowed,
Though powerful, not destructive! Here he sees
Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
And empires rise and fall; regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of men
Project: thrice happy, could he 'scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps;
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,

* The hippopotamus, or river-horse.—T.

The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert,
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonished at the madness of mankind.

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick-swarm the brighter birds. For nature's hand,
That with a sportive vanity has decked
The plumy nations, there her gayest hues
Profusely pours.* But, if she bids them shine,
Arrayed in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet, frugal still, she humbles them in song.
Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
Proud Montezuma's realm, whose legions cast
A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
While Philomel is ours; while in our shades,
Through the soft silence of the listening night,
The sober-suited songstress trills her lay.

But come, my muse, the desert-barrier burst—
A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky;
And, swifter than the toiling caravan,
Shoot o'er the vale of Sennar, ardent climb
The Nubian mountains, and the secret bounds
Of jealous Abyssinia boldly pierce.
Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
Of social commerce comest to rob their wealth;
No holy fury thou, blaspheming Heaven,
With consecrated steel to stab their peace,
And through the land, yet red from civil wounds,
To spread the purple tyranny of Rome.
Thou, like the harmless bee, mayst freely range

* In all the regions of the torrid zone the birds, though more beautiful in their plumage, are observed to be less melodious than ours.—T.

From mead to mead bright with exalted flowers,
From jasmine grove to grove; may'st wander gay,
Through palmy shades and aromatic woods
That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.
There on the breezy summit, spreading fair,
For many a league; or on stupendous rocks,
That from the sun-redoubling valley lift,
Cool to the middle air, their lawny tops;
Where palaces, and fanes, and villas rise;
And gardens smile around, and cultured fields;
And fountains gush; and careless herds and flocks
Securely stray; a world within itself,
Disdaining all assault: there let me draw
Ethereal soul, there drink reviving gales,
Profusely breathing from the spicy groves
And vales of fragrance; there, at distance, hear
The roaring floods and cataracts, that sweep
From disembowelled earth the virgin gold;
And o'er the varied landscape, restless, rove,
Fervent with life of every fairer kind.
A land of wonders! which the sun still eyes
With ray direct, as of the lovely realm
Enamoured, and delighting there to dwell.

How changed the scene! In blazing height of noon,
The sun, oppressed, is plunged in thickest gloom.
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round,
Of struggling night and day malignant mixed,
For to the hot equator crowding fast,
Where, highly rarefied, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll,
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heaped;
Or whirled tempestuous by the gusty wind,

Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charged.
Meantime, amid these upper seas, condensed
Around the cold aërial mountain's brow,
And by conflicting winds together dashed,
The thunder holds his black tremendous throne;
From cloud to cloud the rending lightnings rage;
Till, in the furious elemental war
Dissolved, the whole precipitated mass
Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
Of ancient knowledge; whence, with annual pomp,
Rich king of floods! o'erflows the swelling Nile.
From his two springs, in Gojam's* sunny realm,
Pure-welling out, he through the lucid lake
Of fair Dambea† rolls his infant stream.
There, by the Naïads nursed, he sports away
His playful youth, amid the fragrant isles
That with unfading verdure smile around.
Ambitious, thence the manly river breaks;
And gathering many a flood, and copious fed
With all the mellowed treasures of the sky,
Winds in progressive majesty along:
Through splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze;
Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
Of life-deserted sand; till, glad to quit
The joyless desert, down the Nubian rocks
From thundering steep to steep, he pours his urn,
And Egypt joys beneath the spreading wave.

* A province in the south-east of Abyssinia, in which the Blue river, a branch of the Nile, has three sources.

† A beautiful fresh water lake, about sixty-five miles long and thirty miles broad in the elevated table-land in Gojam.

His brother Niger too, and all the floods
In which the full-formed maids of Afric lave
Their jetty limbs; and all that, from the tract
Of woody mountains stretched thro' gorgeous Ind,
Fall on Cormandel's coast, or Malabar;
From Menam's* orient stream, that nightly shines
With insect-lamps, to where Aurora sheds
On Indus' smiling banks the rosy shower;
All, at this bounteous season, ope their urns,
And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.

Nor less thy world, Columbus, drinks, refreshed,
The lavish moisture of the melting year.
Wide o'er his isles, the branching Oronoque
Rolls a brown deluge, and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees—
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swelled by a thousand streams, impetuous hurled
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty Orellana.† Scarce the muse
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water; scarce she dares attempt
The sea-like Plata; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force,
In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful deserts—worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles and seasons teem in vain
Unseen and unenjoyed. Forsaking these,

* The river that runs through Siam; on whose banks a vast multitude of those insects, called fire-flies, make a beautiful appearance in the night.—T.

† The river of the Amazons.—T.

O'er peopled plains they, fair-diffusive, flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe,
In their soft bosom, many a happy isle;
The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturbed
By christian crime and Europe's cruel sons.
Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquished tide, recoiling from the shock,
Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe;
And ocean trembles for his green domain.
But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth,
This gay profusion of luxurious bliss,
This pomp of nature? what their balmy meads,
Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain?
By vagrant birds dispersed, and wafting winds,
What their unplanted fruits? what the cool draughts,
The ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
Their forests yield? their toiling insects what,
Their silky pride, and vegetable robes?
Ah! what avail their fatal treasures, hid
Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth,
Golconda's* gems, and sad Potosi's mines?
Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun!
What all that Afric's golden rivers roll;
Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores?
Ill-fated race! the softening arts of peace,
Whate'er the humanizing muses teach;
The godlike wisdom of the tempered breast;
Progressive truth, the patient force of thought;
Investigation calm, whose silent powers
Command the world; the light that leads to Heaven;
Kind equal rule, the government of laws,

* A celebrated fort in the province of Hydrabad; used as a depôt for the diamonds and precious stones found in the district.

And all-protecting freedom, which alone
Sustains the name and dignity of man:
These are not theirs. The parent sun himself
Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannize;
And, with oppressive ray, the roseate bloom
Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,
And feature gross: or worse, to ruthless deeds,
Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,
Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there,
The soft regards, the tenderness of life,
The heart-shed tear, the ineffable delight
Of sweet humanity: these court the beam
Of milder climes; in selfish fierce desire,
And the wild fury of voluptuous sense,
There lost. The very brute creation there
This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.
  Lo! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
Which even imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth-issuing, gathers up his train
In orbs immense, then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount, by which diffused,
He throws his folds; and while, with threatening tongue
And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst appalled,
Or shivering flies, or checked at distance stands,
Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,
The small close-lurking minister of fate,
Whose high-concocted venom through the veins
A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift
The vital current. Formed to humble man,
This child of vengeful Nature! There, sublimed
To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
Roam, licensed by the shading hour of guilt

And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut
His sacred eye. The tiger, darting fierce,
Impetuous on the prey his glance has doomed;
The lively shining leopard, speckled o'er
With many a spot, the beauty of the waste;
And, scorning all the taming arts of man,
The keen hyena, fellest of the fell:
These, rushing from the inhospitable woods
Of Mauritania,* or the tufted isles
That verdant rise amid the Libyan wild,
Innumerous glare around their shaggy king,
Majestic, stalking o'er the printed sand;
And, with imperious and repeated roars,
Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks
Crowd near the guardian swain; the nobler herds,
Where round their lordly bull, in rural ease,
They ruminating lie, with horror hear
The coming rage. The awakened village starts;
And to her fluttering breast the mother strains
Her thoughtless infant. From the pirate's den,
Or stern Morocco's tyrant fang, escaped,
The wretch half wishes for his bonds again:
While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,
From Atlas eastward to the frighted Nile.
  Unhappy he! who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone
Amid this world of death. Day after day,
Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
And views the main that ever toils below;
Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
Where the round ether mixes with the wave,

* The name of a Roman province, which consisted of the northern part of Morocco and western part of Algiers.

Ships, dim-discovered, dropping from the clouds.
At evening, to the setting sun he turns
A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
Sinks helpless; while the wonted roar is up,
And hiss continual through the tedious night.
Yet here, e'en here, into these black abodes
Of monsters, unappalled, from stooping Rome,
And guilty Cæsar, liberty retired,
Her Cato following through Numidian* wilds;
Disdainful of Campania's gentle plains,
And all the green delights Ausonia pours;
When for them she must bend the servile knee,
And, fawning, take the splendid robber's boon.
Nor stop the terrors of these regions here.
Commissioned demons oft, angels of wrath,
Let loose the raging elements. Breathed hot
From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
And the wide glittering waste of burning sand,
A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil,
Son of the desert! e'en the camel feels,
Shot through his withered heart, the fiery blast.
Or from the black-red ether, bursting broad,
Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
Commoved around, in gathering eddies play;
Nearer and nearer still they darkening come;
Till, with the general all-involving storm
Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise;
And by their noon-day fount dejected thrown,
Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep,
Beneath descending hills, the caravan

* The ancient name of that part of Africa in which Algiers is now situated.

Is buried deep. In Cairo's crowded streets
The impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.
But chief at sea, whose every flexile wave
Obeys the blast, the aërial tumult swells.
In the dread ocean, undulating wide,
Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
The circling typhon,* whirled from point to point,
Exhausting all the rage of all the sky,
And dire ecnephia* reign. Amid the heavens,
Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy speck†
Compressed, the mighty tempest brooding dwells.
Of no regard, save to the skilful eye,
Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs
Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
Musters its force. A faint deceitful calm,
A fluttering gale, the demon sends before,
To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once,
Precipitant, descends a mingled mass
Of roaring winds, and flame, and rushing floods.
In wild amazement fixed the sailor stands.
Art is too slow. By rapid fate oppressed,
His broad-winged vessel drinks the whelming tide,
Hid in the bosom of the black abyss.
With such mad seas the daring Gama‡ fought,
For many a day and many a dreadful night,
Incessant, labouring round the stormy Cape;
By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst

* Typhon and ecnephia, terms for particular storms or hurricanes known only between the tropics.—T.

† Called by sailors the Ox-eye, being in appearance at first no bigger.—T.

‡ Vasco de Gama, the first who sailed round Africa, by the Cape of Good Hope, to the East Indies.—T.

Of gold. For then from ancient gloom emerged
The rising world of trade: the genius, then,
Of navigation, that, in hopeless sloth,
Had slumbered on the vast Atlantic deep
For idle ages, starting, heard at last
The Lusitanian Prince;* who, Heaven-inspired,
To love of useful glory roused mankind,
And in unbounded commerce mixed the world.

Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
His jaws horrific armed with threefold fate,
Here dwells the direful shark. Lured by the scent
Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
Behold! he, rushing, cuts the briny flood,
Swift as the gale can bear the ship along;
And, from the partners of that cruel trade,
Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons,
Demands his share of prey—demands themselves.
The stormy fates descend: one death involves
Tyrants and slaves; when straight, their mangled limbs
Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.

When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains
Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
And draws the copious steam from swampy fens,
Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads; or from woods,
Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
In vapours rank and blue corruption wrapt,
Whose gloomy horrors yet no desperate foot

* Don Henry, third son to John the First, King of Portugal. His strong genius to the discovery of new countries was the chief source of all the modern improvements in navigation.—T.

Has ever dared to pierce; then, wasteful, forth
Walks the dire power of pestilent disease.
A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
Sick nature blasting, and to heartless woe
And feeble desolation, casting down
The towering hopes and all the pride of man.
Such as, of late, at Carthagena* quenched
The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
The miserable scene; you, pitying, saw
To infant-weakness sunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale-quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright; you heard the groans
Of agonizing ships, from shore to shore;
Heard, nightly plunged amid the sullen waves,
The frequent corse; while on each other fixed,
In sad presage, the blank assistants seemed,
Silent, to ask, whom fate would next demand.
What need I mention those inclement skies,
Where, frequent o'er the sickening city, plague,
The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
Descends? from Ethiopia's poisoned woods,
From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
With locust-armies putrefying heaped,
This great destroyer sprung.† Her awful rage
The brutes escape. Man is her destined prey,
Intemperate man! and o'er his guilty domes
She draws a close incumbent cloud of death;

* When the British fleet, under Admiral Vernon, attacked Carthagena, in 1740, the malaria from the land reached the ships and made terrible ravages amongst the sailors.

† These are the causes supposed to be the first origin of the plague in Dr. Mead's elegant book on that subject.—T.

Uninterrupted by the living winds,
Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze; and stained
With many a mixture by the sun, suffused,
Of angry aspect. Princely wisdom, then,
Dejects his watchful eye; and from the hand
Of feeble justice, ineffectual, drop
The sword and balance: mute the voice of joy,
And hushed the clamour of the busy world.
Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad! 1070
Into the worst of deserts sudden turned
The cheerful haunt of men: unless, escaped
From the doomed house where matchless horror reigns,
Shut up by barbarous fear, the smitten wretch,
With frenzy wild, breaks loose, and, loud to Heaven
Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
Inhuman and unwise. The sullen door,
Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
Fearing to turn, abhors society.
Dependants, friends, relations, love himself, 1080
Savaged by woe, forget the tender tie,
The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
But vain their selfish care: the circling sky,
The wide enlivening air, is full of fate;
And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs
They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourned.
Thus o'er the prostrate city black despair
Extends her raven wing; while, to complete
The scene of desolation, stretched around,
The grim guards stand, denying all retreat, 1090
And give the flying wretch a better death.

Much yet remains unsung: the rage intense
Of brazen-vaulted skies, of iron fields,

Where drought and famine starve the blasted year;
Fired by the torch of noon to tenfold rage,
The infuriate hill that shoots the pillared flame;
And, roused within the subterranean world,
The expanding earthquake, that resistless shakes
Aspiring cities from their solid base,
And buries mountains in the flaming gulf.
But 'tis enough; return, my vagrant muse;
A nearer scene of horror calls thee home.
Behold, slow-settling o'er the lurid grove
Unusual darkness broods; and growing gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharged
With wrathful vapour, from the secret beds,
Where sleep the mineral generations, drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctured trains of latent flame,
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A reddening gloom, a magazine of fate,
Ferment; till, by the touch ethereal roused,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war
Of fighting winds, while all is calm below,
They, furious, spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread through the dun expanse; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
Rolls o'er the muttering earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath.
Prone, to the lowest vale, the aërial tribes
Descend: the tempest-loving raven scarce
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
Cast a deploring eye; by man forsook,
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,

Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.
'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all:
When to the startled eye the sudden glance
Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud;
And, following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls its awful burden on the wind,
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
The noise astounds; till over head a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide, then shuts
And opens wider; shuts and opens still
Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze.
Follows the loosened aggravated roar,
Enlarging, deepening, mingling, peal on peal
Crushed horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood; and yet, its flame unquenched,
The unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
Black from the stroke, above, the smouldering pine
Stands a sad shattered trunk; and, stretched below,
A lifeless group the blasted cattle lie:
Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull,
And ox half-raised. Struck on the castled cliff,
The venerable tower and spiry fane
Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and, from their deep recess,

Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake.
Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar: with mighty crush,
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmanmaur heaped hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs; and Snowden's peak,
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
Far seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
And Thulè * bellows through her utmost isles.
Guilt hears appalled, with deeply troubled thought;
And yet not always on the guilty head
Descends the fated flash. Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair,
With equal virtue formed, and equal grace,
The same, distinguished by their sex alone:
Hers the mild lustre of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.
They loved: but such their guileless passion was,
As in the dawn of time informed the heart
Of innocence and undissembling truth.
'Twas friendship heightened by the mutual wish;
The enchanting hope and sympathetic glow
Beamed from the mutual eye. Devoting all
To love, each was to each a dearer self;
Supremely happy in the awakened power
Of giving joy. Alone, amid the shades,
Still in harmonious intercourse they lived
The rural day, and talked the flowing heart,
Or sighed, and looked unutterable things.

* An Island supposed to be situated in the northern part of the German Ocean; regarded by the ancients as the most northernly land in the world

So passed their life, a clear united stream,
By care unruffled, till, in evil hour,
The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
Heedless how far and where its mazes strayed,
While, with each other blest, creative love
Still bade eternal Eden smile around.
Heavy with instant fate, her bosom heaved
Unwonted sighs, and stealing oft a look
Of the big gloom, on Celadon her eye
Fell tearful, wetting her disordered cheek.
In vain assuring love, and confidence
In Heaven, repressed her fear; it grew, and shook
Her frame near dissolution. He perceived
The unequal conflict, and, as angels look
On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
With love illumined high. "Fear not," he said,
"Sweet innocence! thou stranger to offence
"And inward storm! He who yon skies involves
"In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
"With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
"That wastes at midnight, or the undreaded hour
"Of noon, flies harmless; and that very voice
"Which thunders terror through the guilty heart,
"With tongues of seraphs whispers peace to thine.
"'Tis safety to be near thee sure, and thus
"To clasp perfection!" From his void embrace,
Mysterious Heaven! that moment, to the ground,
A blackened corse, was struck the beauteous maid.
But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
Pierced by severe amazement, hating life,
Speechless, and fixed in all the death of woe!
So, faint resemblance! on the marble tomb.
The well-dissembled mourner stooping stands,

For ever silent and for ever sad.
As from the face of heaven the shattered clouds
Tumultuous rove, the interminable sky
Sublimer swells, and o'er the world expands
A purer azure. Nature, from the storm,
Shines out afresh; and through the lightened air
A higher lustre and a clearer calm,
Diffusive, tremble; while, as if in sign
Of danger past, a glittering robe of joy,
Set off abundant by the yellow ray,
Invests the fields, yet dropping from distress.
'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
Joined to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
Of flocks thick nibbling through the clovered vale.
And shall the hymn be marred by thankless man,
Most-favoured; who with voice articulate
Should lead the chorus of this lower world?
Shall he, so soon forgetful of the hand
That hushed the thunder, and serenes the sky,
Extinguished feel that spark the tempest waked,
That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears?
Cheered by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
A sandy bottom shows. Awhile he stands
Gazing the inverted landscape, half afraid
To meditate the blue profound below;
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
His ebon tresses and his rosy cheek
Instant emerge; and through the obedient wave,
At each short breathing by his lip repelled,
With arms and legs according well, he makes,
As humour leads, an easy-winding path;

While, from his polished sides, a dewy light
Effuses on the pleased spectators round.
This is the purest exercise of health,
The kind refresher of the summer-heats;
Nor, when cold Winter keens the brightening flood,
Would I, weak-shivering, linger on the brink.
Thus life redoubles; and is oft preserved,
By the bold swimmer, in the swift illapse
Of accident disastrous. Hence the limbs
Knit into force; and the same Roman arm
That rose victorious o'er the conquered earth,
First learned, while tender, to subdue the wave.
Even from the body's purity, the mind
Receives a secret sympathetic aid.
Close in the covert of an hazel copse,
Where, winded into pleasing solitudes,
Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat,
Pensive, and pierced with love's delightful pangs.
There to the stream that down the distant rocks
Hoarse-murmuring fell, and plaintive breeze that
Among the bending willows, falsely he [played
Of Musidora's cruelty complained.
She felt his flame; but deep within her breast
In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,
The soft return concealed—save when it stole
In sidelong glances from her downcast eye,
Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs.
Touched by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
He framed a melting lay, to try her heart;
And, if an infant passion struggled there,
To call that passion forth. Thrice-happy swain!
A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate
Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.

For, lo! conducted by the laughing loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought:
Warm in her cheek the sultry season glowed;
And, robed in loose array, she came to bathe
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do? In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutterings, he a while remained.
A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement, known to few,
Perplexed his breast and urged him to retire:
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done?
Meantime, this fairer nymph than ever blest
Arcadian stream, with timid eye around
The banks surveying, stripped her beauteous limbs,
To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.
Ah! then, not Paris on the piny top
Of Ida panted stronger, when aside
The rival-goddesses the veil divine
Cast unconfined, and gave him all their charms,
Than, Damon, thou; as from the snowy leg
And slender foot the inverted silk she drew;
As the soft touch dissolved the virgin zone;
And, through the parting robe, the alternate breast,
With youth wild-throbbing, on thy lawless gaze
In full luxuriance rose. But, desperate youth,
How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view;
As from her naked limbs of glowing white,
Harmonious swelled by nature's finest hand,
In folds loose-floating fell the faintor lawn,
And fair exposed she stood, shrunk from herself,
With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
Alarmed, and starting like the fearful fawn?

Then to the flood she rushed: the parted flood
Its lovely guest with closing waves received;
And every beauty softening, every grace
Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed:
As shines the lily through the crystal mild:
Or as the rose amid the morning dew,
Fresh from Aurora's hand, more sweetly glows.
While thus she wantoned, now beneath the wave
But ill-concealed; and now with streaming locks,
That half-embraced her in a humid veil,
Rising again, the latent Damon drew
Such maddening draughts of beauty to the soul,
As for a while o'erwhelmed his raptured thought
With luxury too daring. Checked, at last,
By love's respectful modesty, he deemed
The theft profane, if aught profane to love
Can e'er be deemed, and, struggling from the shade,
With headlong hurry fled: but first these lines,
Traced by his ready pencil, on the bank
With trembling hand he threw. "Bathe on, my fair,
"Yet unbeheld save by the sacred eye
"Of faithful love: I go to guard thy haunt;
"To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot
"And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,
As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,
A stupid moment motionless she stood:
So stands the statue* that enchants the world;
So, bending, tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingled beauties of exulting Greece.
Recovering, swift she flew to find those robes
Which blissful Eden knew not; and, arrayed

* The Venus of Medici.—T.

In careless haste, the alarming paper snatched.
But, when her Damon's well known hand she saw,
Her terrors vanished, and a softer train
Of mixed emotions, hard to be described,
Her sudden bosom seized: shame void of guilt,
The charming blush of innocence, esteem
And admiration of her lover's flame,
By modesty exalted. Even a sense
Of self-approving beauty stole across
Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm
Hushed by degrees the tumult of her soul;
And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
Incumbent hung, she with the sylvan pen
Of rural lovers this confession carved,
Which soon her Damon kissed with weeping joy:
"Dear youth! sole judge of what these verses mean,
"By fortune too much favoured, but by love,
"Alas! not favoured less, be still as now
"Discreet; the time may come you need not fly."
The Sun has lost his rage: his downward orb
Shoots nothing now but animating warmth
And vital lustre; that, with various ray,
Lights up the clouds—those beauteous robes of heaven,
Incessant rolled into romantic shapes;
The dream of waking fancy! Broad below,
Covered with ripening fruits, and swelling fast
Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
Of walking comes; for him who lonely loves
To seek the distant hills, and there converse
With nature, there to harmonize his heart,
And in pathetic song to breathe around
The harmony to others. Social friends,

Attuned to happy unison of soul;
To whose exalting eye a fairer world,
Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
Displays its charms; whose minds are richly
fraught
With philosophic stores, superior light;
And in whose breast, enthusiastic, burns
Virtue the sons of interest deem romance,
Now called abroad enjoy the falling day:
Now to the verdant *portico* of woods,
To nature's vast *Lyceum* forth they walk;
By that kind *school* where no proud master reigns,
The full free converse of the friendly heart,
Improving and improved. Now from the world,
Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
And pour their souls in transport, which the sire
Of love approving hears, and calls it good.
Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?
The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we choose?
All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind
Along the streams? or walk the smiling mead?
Or court the forest glades? or wander wild
Among the waving harvests? or ascend,
While radiant Summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful Shene?*. Here let us sweep
The boundless landscape; now the raptured eye,
Exulting swift, to huge Augusta† send,
Now to the Sister-Hills‡ that skirt her plain,
To lofty Harrow now, and now to where

* The old name of Richmond, signifying, in Saxon, Shining or Splendid.—T.

† London.—See note on "Spring," line 108.

‡ Highgate and Hamstead.—T.

Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.
In lovely contrast to this glorious view,
Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
The where the silver Thames first rural grows.
There let the feasted eye unwearied stray;
Luxurious, there, rove through the pendant woods
That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat;
And, stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks,
Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retired,
With her, the pleasing partner of his heart,
The worthy Queensberry* yet laments his Gay,
And polished Cornbury† wooes the willing muse,
Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames;
Fair-winding up to where the muses haunt
In Twit'nam's bowers, and for their Pope implore
The healing God‡ to royal Hampton's pile,
To Clermont's terrassed height, and Esher's groves,
Where in the sweetest solitude, embraced
By the soft windings of the silent mole,
From courts and senates Pelham§ finds repose.
Inchanting vale! beyond whate'er the muse
Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung!
O vale of bliss! O softly swelling hills!
On which the power of cultivation lies,
And joys to see the wonders of his toil.
Heavens! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,

* The Duke of Queensberry, in whose house Gay, the Author of the Fables, spent the latter part of his life.

† Henry Lord Hyde and Cornbury, eldest son of the Earl of Clarendon.

‡ In his last sickness. [Murdoch.]

§ The Right Honourable Henry Pelham, who held various offices of state from 1721 until his death.

And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays!
Happy Britannia! where the queen of arts,
Inspiring vigor, liberty, abroad,
Walks, unconfined, even to thy farthest cots,
And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.

Rich is thy soil, and merciful thy clime;
Thy streams unfailing in the Summer's drought;
Unmatched thy guardian-oaks; thy valleys float
With golden waves; and on thy mountains flocks
Bleat numberless; while, roving round their sides,
Bellow the blackening herds in lusty droves.
Beneath, thy meadows glow, and rise unquelled
Against the mower's scythe. On every hand
Thy villas shine. Thy country teems with wealth;
And property assures it to the swain,
Pleased and unwearied in his guarded toil.

Full are thy cities with the sons of art;
And trade and joy, in every busy street,
Mingling are heard: even Drudgery himself,
As at the car he sweats, or, dusty, hews
The palace stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports,
Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
With labour burn, and echo to the shouts
Of hurried sailor, as he, hearty, waves
His last adieu, and, loosening every sheet,
Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind.

Bold, firm, and graceful, are thy generous youth,
By hardship sinewed, and by danger fired,
Scattering the nations where they go; and first,
Or in the listed plain, or stormy seas.
Mild are thy glories too, as o'er the plans
Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside;

In genius and substantial learning, high;
For every virtue, every worth, renowned;
Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind;
Yet, like the mustering thunder when provoked,
The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
Of those that under grim oppression groan.
Thy sons of glory many! Alfred thine,
In whom the splendour of heroic war,
And more heroic peace, when governed well,
Combine; whose hallowed name the virtues saint,
And his own muses love—the best of kings!
With him thy Edwards and thy Henries shine,
Names dear to fame; the first who deep impressed
On haughty Gaul the terror of thy arms,
That awes her genius still. In statesmen thou,
And patriots, fertile. Thine a steady More,*
Who, with a generous though mistaken zeal,
Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage,
Like Cato firm, like Aristides just,
Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor—
A dauntless soul erect, who smiled on death.
Frugal and wise, a Walsingham† is thine,
A Drake,‡ who made thee mistress of the deep,
And bore thy name in thunder round the world.
Then flamed thy spirit high: but who can speak
The numerous worthies of the maiden-reign?
In Raleigh mark their every glory mixed;

* Sir Thomas More, who was executed in 1535 for refusing to acknowledge the legality of the marriage of King Henry VIII. with Catherine Parr.

† Sir Francis Walsingham. Celebrated as a skilful and active diplomatist; born 1530, died 1590.

‡ Sir Francis Drake. The first naval commander who sailed round the world; born 1546, died 1595.

Raleigh, the scourge of Spain! whose breast with all
The sage, the patriot, and the hero burned.
Nor sunk his vigour when a coward-reign
The warrior fettered, and at last resigned,
To glut the vengeance of a vanquished foe.
Then, active still and unrestrained, his mind
Explored the vast extent of ages past,
And with his prison-hours enriched the world;*
Yet found no times, in all the long research,
So glorious, or so base, as those he proved;
In which he conquered, and in which he bled.
Nor can the muse the gallant Sidney pass,
The plume of war! with early laurels crowned,
The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.
A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land!
Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
Who stemmed the torrent of a downward age
To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
Bright, at his call, thy age of men effulged;
Of men on whom late time a kindling eye
Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read.
Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew
The grave where Russel lies; whose tempered blood
With calmest cheerfulness for thee resigned,
Stained the sad annals of a giddy reign;
Aiming at lawless power, though meanly sunk
In loose inglorious luxury. With him
His friend, the British Cassius,† fearless bled;

* Sir Walter Raleigh or Ralegh. Celebrated as a scholar, statesman, and warrior. He completed his "History of the World" whilst in confinement in the Tower of London; born 1552, beheaded 1618.

† Algernon Sidney.—T. Who, with Lord William Russel,

Of high determined spirit, roughly brave,
By ancient learning to the enlightened love
Of ancient freedom warmed. Fair thy renown
In awful sages and in noble bards;
Soon as the light of dawning science spread
Her orient ray, and waked the muses' song.
Thine is a Bacon, hapless in his choice;
Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
Kind Nature formed, deep, comprehensive, clear,
Exact and elegant; in one rich soul,
Plato, the Stagyrite,* and Tully joined.
The great deliverer he! who from the gloom
Of cloistered monks and jargon-teaching schools,
Led forth the true philosophy, there long
Held in the magic chain of words, and forms,
And definitions void: he led her forth,
Daughter of Heaven! that slow-ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
With radiant finger points to Heaven again.
The generous Ashley† thine, the friend of man;
Who scanned his nature with a brother's eye,
His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,
To touch the finer movements of the mind,
And with the moral beauty charm the heart.

was arrested on a charge of being concerned in the Rye House Plot, condemned by Judge Jefferies, and executed on Tower Hill in 1683.

* Aristotle the Grecian philosopher. He was born at Stagyra, B.C. 384.

† Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury.—T. Born 1671, died 1713.

Why need I name thy Boyle,* whose pious search,
Amid the dark recesses of his works,
The great Creator sought? And why thy Locke,
Who made the whole internal world his own?
Let Newton, pure intelligence, whom God
To mortals lent, to trace his boundless works
From laws sublimely simple, speak thy fame
In all philosophy. For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakespear thine and nature's boast?
Is not each great, each amiable muse
Of classic ages in thy Milton met?
A genius universal as his theme,
Astonishing as chaos, as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair, as heaven sublime.
Nor shall my verse that elder bard forget,
The gentle Spenser, fancy's pleasing son;
Who, like a copious river, poured his song
O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground:
Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage,
Chaucer, whose native manners-painting verse,
Well moralized, shines through the gothic cloud
Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.
May my song soften, as thy daughters I,
Britannia, hail! for beauty is their own,
The feeling heart, simplicity of life,
And elegance, and taste; the faultless form,
Shaped by the hand of harmony; the cheek,
Where the live crimson, through the native white
Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom,

* The Honourable Robert Boyle, a distinguished philosopher; born 1627, died 1691.

And every nameless grace; the parted lip,
Like the red rosebud moist with morning dew,
Breathing delight; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck slight-shaded, and the swelling breast;
The look resistless, piercing to the soul,
And by the soul informed, when dressed in love
She sits high-smiling in the conscious eye.
  Island of bliss! amid the subject seas
That thunder round thy rocky coasts, set up,
At once the wonder, terror, and delight
Of distant nations; whose remotest shores
Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling, like thy hoar cliffs the loud sea-wave.
  O Thou! by whose almighty nod the scale
Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving virtues round the land,
In bright patrol: white peace, and social love;
The tender-looking charity, intent
On gentle deeds, and shedding tears through smiles;
Undaunted truth, and dignity of mind;
Courage composed and keen; sound temperance,
Healthful in heart and look; clear chastity,
With blushes reddening as she moves along,
Disordered at the deep regard she draws;
Rough industry; activity untired,
With copious life informed, and all awake:
While in the radiant front, superior shines
That first paternal virtue, public zeal;
Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
And, ever musing on the common weal,
Still labours glorious with some great design.

Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,
Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds
Assembled gay, a richly gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his setting throne.
Air, earth, and ocean smile immense. And now,
As if his weary chariot sought the bowers
Of Amphitrité and her tending nymphs,
(So Grecian fable sung) he dips his orb;
Now half-immersed; and now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.
For ever running an enchanted round,
Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void;
As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
This moment hurrying wild the impassioned soul,
The next in nothing lost. 'Tis so to him,
The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
A sight of horror to the cruel wretch,
Who, all day long in sordid pleasure rolled,
Himself an useless load, has squandered vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheered
A drooping family of modest worth.
But to the generous still-improving mind,
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
Diffusing kind beneficence around,
Boastless, as now descends the silent dew—
To him the long review of ordered life
Is inward rapture, only to be felt.
Confessed from yonder slow-extinguished clouds,
All ether softening, sober evening takes
Her wonted station in the middle air;
A thousand shadows at her beck. First this
She sends on earth; then that of deeper dye
Steals soft behind; and then a deeper still,

In circle following circle, gathers round,
To close the face of things. A fresher gale
Begins to wave the wood, and stir the stream,
Sweeping with shadowy gust the fields of corn;
While the quail clamours for his running mate.
Wide o'er the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze,
A whitening shower of vegetable down
Amusive floats. The kind impartial care
Of Nature nought disdains: thoughtful to feed
Her lowest sons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feathered seeds she wings.

His folded flock secure, the shepherd home
Hies, merry-hearted; and by turns relieves
The ruddy milk-maid of her brimming pail;
The beauty whom perhaps his witless heart,
Unknowing what the joy-mixed anguish means,
Sincerely loves, by that best language shown
Of cordial glances, and obliging deeds.
Onward they pass, o'er many a panting height,
And valley sunk and unfrequented; where
At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
In various game and revelry to pass
The summer-night, as village-stories tell.
But far about they wander from the grave
Of him, whom his ungentle fortune urged
Against his own sad breast to lift the hand
Of impious violence. The lonely tower
Is also shunned; whose mournful chambers hold,
So night-struck fancy dreams, the yelling ghost.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
The glow-worm lights his gem; and through the dark,
A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
The world to night; not in her winter-robe

Of massy Stygian woof, but loose-arrayed
In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
Glanced from the imperfect surfaces of things,
Flings half an image on the straining eye;
While wavering woods, and villages, and streams,
And rocks, and mountain tops, that long retained
The ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,
Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
Thence weary vision turns; where, leading soft
The silent hours of love, with purest ray
Sweet Venus shines; and from her genial rise,
When day-light sickens, till it springs afresh,
Unrivalled reigns, the fairest lamp of night.
As thus the effulgence tremulous I drink,
With cherished gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot
Across the sky; or horizontal dart
In wondrous shapes: by fearful murmuring crowds
Portentous deemed. Amid the radiant orbs
That more than deck, that animate the sky,
The life-infusing suns of other worlds,
Lo! from the dread immensity of space
Returning, with accelerated course,
The rushing comet to the sun descends;
And as he sinks below the shading earth,
With awful train projected o'er the heavens,
The guilty nations tremble. But, above
Those superstitious horrors that enslave
The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith
And blind amazement prone, the enlightened few,
Whose godlike minds philosophy exalts,
The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy
Divinely great; they in their powers exult,
That wondrous force of thought, which mounting spurns

This dusky spot, and measures all the sky;
While, from his far excursions through the wilds
Of barren ether, faithful to his time,
They see the blazing wonder rise anew,
In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
To work the will of all-sustaining love:
From his huge vapoury train perhaps to shake
Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs
Through which his long ellipsis winds; perhaps
To lend new fuel to declining suns,
To light up worlds, and feed the eternal fire.
With thee, serene Philosophy, with thee,
And thy bright garland, let me crown my song!
Effusive source of evidence and truth!
A lustre shedding o'er the ennobled mind,
Stronger than summer-noon; and pure as that,
Whose mild vibrations soothe the parted soul,
New to the dawning of celestial day.
Hence through her nourished powers, enlarged by thee,
She springs aloft, with elevated pride,
Above the tangling mass of low desires,
That bind the fluttering crowd; and, angel-winged,
The heights of science and of virtue gains,
Where all is calm and clear; with nature round,
Or in the starry regions, or the abyss,
To reason's and to fancy's eye displayed:
The first up-tracing, from the dreary void,
The chain of causes and effects to Him,
The world-producing Essence, who alone
Possesses being; while the last receives
The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
And every beauty, delicate or bold,
Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,

Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.
Tutored by Thee, hence Poetry exalts
Her voice to ages; and informs the page
With music, image, sentiment, and thought,
Never to die; the treasure of mankind,
Their highest honour, and their truest joy.
Without Thee, what were unenlightened man?
A savage, roaming through the woods and wilds
In quest of prey, and with the unfashioned fur
Rough-clad; devoid of every finer art
And elegance of life. Nor happiness
Domestic, mixed of tenderness and care,
Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
Nor guardian law, were his; nor various skill
To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
Mechanic; nor the heaven-conducted prow
Of navigation bold, that fearless braves
The burning line or dares the wintry pole,
Mother severe of infinite delights!
Nothing, save rapine, indolence, and guile,
And woes on woes, a still-revolving train!
Whose horrid circle had made human life
Than non-existence worse: but, taught by Thee,
Ours are the plans of policy, and peace;
To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all,
Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds
Ply the tough oar, philosophy directs
The ruling helm; or, like the liberal breath
Of potent heaven, invisible, the sail
Swells out, and bears the inferior world along.
Nor to this evanescent speck of earth
Poorly confined: the radiant tracts on high
Are her exalted range; intent to gaze

Creation through; and, from that full complex
Of never ending wonders, to conceive
Of the Sole Being right, who *spoke the word*,
And nature moved complete. With inward view,
Thence on the ideal kingdom swift she turns
Her eye; and instant, at her powerful glance,
The obedient phantoms vanish or appear;
Compound, divide, and into order shift,
Each to his rank, from plain perception up
To the fair forms of fancy's fleeting train;
To reason then, deducing truth from truth,
And notion quite abstract; where first begins
The world of spirits, action all, and life
Unfettered and unmixt. But here the cloud,
So wills Eternal Providence, sits deep.
Enough for us to know that this dark state,
In wayward passions lost and vain pursuits,
This infancy of being, cannot prove,
The final issue of the works of God,
By boundless Love and perfect Wisdom formed,
And ever rising with the rising mind.

# AUTUMN.

53858

## THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Addressed to Mr. Onslow. A prospect of the fields ready for harvest. Reflections in praise of industry raised by that view. Reaping. A tale relative to it. A harvest storm. Shooting and hunting; their barbarity. A ludicrous account of foxhunting. A view of an orchard. Wall fruit. A vineyard. A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn; whence a digression, inquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers. Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation. The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland. Hence a view of the country. A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods. After a gentle dusky day, moonlight. Autumnal meteors. Morning; to which succeeds a calm, pure, sunshiny day, such as usually shuts up the season. The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolved in joy. The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

# AUTUMN.

CROWNED with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on; the Doric reed once more,
Well pleased, I tune. Whate'er the wintry frost,
Nitrous, prepared, the various-blossomed Spring
Put in white promise forth, and summer-suns
Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.
Onslow! * the muse, ambitious of thy name,
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,
Would from the public voice thy gentle ear
A while engage. Thy noble cares she knows,—
The patriot virtues that distend thy thought,
Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow;

* The Right Honourable Arthur Onslow, second son of Sir Richard Onslow. He was Speaker of the House of Commons from 1728—1761.

While listening senates hang upon thy tongue,
Devolving through the maze of eloquence
A roll of periods, sweeter than her song.
But she too pants for public virtue,—she,
Though weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
Whene'er her country rushes on her heart,
Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,
And Libra weighs in equal scales the year,*
From Heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
With golden light enlivened, wide invests
The happy world. Attempered suns arise, [clouds
Sweet-beamed, and shedding oft through lucid
A pleasing calm; while broad and brown, below,
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain;
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun,
By fits effulgent, gilds the illumined field,
And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
A gaily chequered, heart-expanding view,
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

These are thy blessings, industry! rough power!
Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
And all the soft civility of life:

* When the autumnal equinox begins.

Raiser of human kind! by nature cast,
Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
With various seeds of art deep in the mind
Implanted, and profusely poured around
Materials infinite; but idle all.
Still unexerted, in the unconscious breast,
Slept the lethargic powers; corruption still,
Voracious, swallowed what the liberal hand
Of bounty scattered o'er the savage year;
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mixed
With beasts of prey; or for his acorn-meal
Fought the fierce tusky boar; a shivering wretch!
Aghast and comfortless when the bleak north,
With Winter charged, let the mixed tempest fly,
Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost—
Then to the shelter of the hut he fled;
And the wild season, sordid, pined away.
For home he had not: home is the resort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and supported, polished friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss.
But this the rugged savage never felt,
Even desolate in crowds; and thus his days
Rolled heavy, dark, and unenjoyed, along:
A waste of time! till industry approached,
And roused him from his miserable sloth;
His faculties unfolded; pointed out
Where lavish Nature the directing hand
Of Art demanded; showed him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,

On what the torrent, and the gathered blast;
Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe;
Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
Till by degrees the finished fabric rose:
Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm,
Or bright in glossy silk, and flowing lawn;
With wholesome viands filled his table, poured
The generous glass around, inspired to wake
The life-refining soul of decent wit:
Nor stopped at barren bare necessity;
But, still advancing bolder, led him on
To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace;
And, breathing high ambition through his soul,
Set science, wisdom, glory, in his view,
And bade him be the lord of all below.
Then gathering men their natural powers combined,
And formed a public; to the general good
Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.
For this the patriot-council met—the full,
The free, and fairly represented whole;
For this they planned the holy guardian laws,
Distinguished orders, animated arts,
And with joint force oppression chaining, set
Imperial justice at the helm; yet still
To them accountable: nor slavish dreamed
That toiling millions must resign their weal
And all the honey of their search, to such
As for themselves alone themselves have raised.
Hence every form of cultivated life
In order set, protected, and inspired,
Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
Society grew numerous, high, polite,

And happy. Nurse of art! the city reared
In beauteous pride her tower-encircled head;
And, stretching street on street, by thousands drew,
From twining woody haunts, or the tough yew
To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons.
Then commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;
Raised the strong crane; choked up the loaded street
With foreign plenty; and thy stream, O Thames,
Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!
Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,
Like a long wintry forest, groves of masts
Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between
Possessed the breezy void; the sooty hulk
Steered, sluggish, on; the splendid barge along
Rowed, regular to harmony; around,
The boat, light-skimming, stretched its oary wings;
While deep the various voice of fervent toil
From bank to bank increased; whence, ribbed with oak,
To bear the British thunder, black and bold,
The roaring vessel rushed into the main.
Then too the pillared dome, magnific, heaved
Its ample roof; and luxury within
Poured out her glittering stores: the canvass smooth,
With glowing life protuberant, to the view
Embodied rose; the statue seemed to breathe,
And soften into flesh, beneath the touch
Of forming art, imagination-flushed.
All is the gift of industry; whate'er
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life
Delightful. Pensive Winter, cheered by him,
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
The excluded tempest idly rave along:

His hardened fingers deck the gaudy Spring;
Without him Summer were an arid waste;
Nor to the Autumnal months could thus transmit
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,
That, waving round, recall my wandering song.
  Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,
And, unperceived, unfolds the spreading day,
Before the ripened field the reapers stand,
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate
By nameless gentle offices her toil.
At once they stoop, and swell the lusty sheaves;
While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,
And steal, unfelt, the sultry hours away.
Behind the master walks; builds up the shocks;
And, conscious, glancing oft on every side
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
The gleaners spread around, and here and there,
Spike after spike, their sparing harvest pick.
Be not too narrow, husbandmen! but fling
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
The liberal handful. Think, oh! grateful, think
How good the God of harvest is to you;
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields,
While these unhappy partners of your kind
Wide-hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,
And ask their humble dole. The various turns
Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want
What now, with hard reluctance, faint, ye give.
  The lovely young Lavinia once had friends;
And fortune smiled, deceitful, on her birth.

For, in her helpless years deprived of all,
Of every stay, save innocence and Heaven,
She, with her widowed mother, feeble, old,
And poor, lived in a cottage, far retired
Among the windings of a woody vale;
By solitude and deep surrounding shades,
But more by bashful modesty, concealed.
Together thus they shunned the cruel scorn
Which virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
From giddy fashion and low-minded pride;
Almost on Nature's common bounty fed;
Like the gay birds that sung them to repose,
Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves; unstained and pure
As is the lily, or the mountain snow.
The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
Still on the ground dejected, darting all
Their humid beams into the blooming flowers;
Or when the mournful tale her mother told,
Of what her faithless fortune promised once,
Thrilled in her thought, they, like the dewy star
Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
Sat, fair-proportioned, on her polished limbs,
Veiled in a simple robe, their best attire;
Beyond the pomp of dress: for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is, when unadorned, adorned the most.
Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
Recluse amid the close-embowering woods.
As in the hollow breast of Apennine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills,
A myrtle rises, far from human eye,

And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild
So flourished blooming, and unseen by all,
The sweet Lavinia; till, at length, compelled
By strong necessity's supreme command,
With smiling patience in her looks, she went
To glean Palemon's fields. The pride of swains
Palemon was, the generous, and the rich;
Who led the rural life in all its joy
And elegance, such as Arcadian song
Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times,
When tyrant custom had not shackled man,
But free to follow Nature was the mode.
He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes
Amusing, chanced beside his reaper-train
To walk, when poor Lavinia drew his eye;
Unconscious of her power, and turning quick
With unaffected blushes from his gaze:
He saw her, charming, but he saw not half
The charms her downcast modesty concealed.
That very moment love and chaste desire
Sprung in his bosom, to himself unknown;
For still the world prevailed and its dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,
Should his heart own a gleaner in the field;
And thus, in secret, to his soul he sighed:
"What pity! that so delicate a form,
By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense
And more than vulgar goodness seem to dwell,
Should be devoted to the rude embrace
Of some indecent clown! she looks, methinks,
Of old Acasto's line; and to my mind
Recalls that patron of my happy life,
From whom my liberal fortune took its rise;

Now to the dust gone down—his houses, lands,
And once fair-spreading family, dissolved.
'Tis said that in some lone, obscure retreat,
Urged by remembrance sad, and decent pride,
Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
His aged widow and his daughter live,
Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
Romantic wish, would this the daughter were!"

When, strict enquiring, from herself he found
She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
Of bountiful Acasto, who can speak
The mingled passions that surprised his heart,
And through his nerves in shivering transport ran?
Then blazed his smothered flame, avowed, and bold;
And, as he viewed her, ardent, o'er and o'er,
Love, gratitude, and pity wept at once.
Confused, and frightened, at his sudden tears,
Her rising beauties flushed a higher bloom,
As thus Palemon, passionate and just,
Poured out the pious rapture of his soul:

"And art thou then Acasto's dear remains?
She, whom my restless gratitude has sought
So long in vain? O yes! the very same,
The softened image of my noble friend;
Alive his every feature, every look,
More elegantly touched. Sweeter than Spring!
Thou soul surviving blossom from the root
That nourished up my fortune! say, ah where,
In what sequestered desert, hast thou drawn
The kindest aspect of delighted Heaven?
Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair;
Though poverty's cold wind and crushing rain
Beat, keen and heavy, on thy tender years?

Oh! let me now into a richer soil
Transplant thee safe, where vernal suns and showers
Diffuse their warmest, largest influence;
And of my garden be the pride and joy!
It ill befits thee, oh, it ill befits
Acasto's daughter,—his, whose open stores,
Though vast, were little to his ampler heart,
The father of a country—thus to pick
The very refuse of those harvest fields,
Which from his bounteous friendship I enjoy.
Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
But ill-applied to such a rugged task;
The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine;
If to the various blessings which thy house
Has on me lavished, thou wilt add that bliss,
That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee!"
Here ceased the youth: yet still his speaking eye
Expressed the sacred triumph of his soul,
With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely raised.
Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
Of goodness irresistible, and all
In sweet disorder lost, she blushed consent.
The news immediate to her mother brought,
While, pierced with anxious thought, she pined away
The lonely moments for Lavinia's fate;
Amazed, and scarce believing what she heard,
Joy seized her withered veins, and one bright gleam
Of setting life shone on her evening-hours:
Not less enraptured than the happy pair;
Who flourished long in tender bliss, and rear'd
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,

And good, the grace of all the country round.* 310
Defeating oft the labours of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast.
At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
Their trembling tops, and a still murmur runs
Along the soft-inclining fields of corn;
But as the aërial tempest fuller swells,
And in one mighty stream, invisible,
Immense, the whole excited atmosphere
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;
Strained to the root, the stooping forest pours
A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves. 321
High beat, the circling mountains eddy in,
From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
And send it in a torrent down the vale.
Exposed, and naked to its utmost rage,
Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,
Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force;
Or whirled in air, or into vacant chaff 329
Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,
Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends
In one continuous flood. Still over head
The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk and flatted, in the sordid wave.
Sudden the ditches swell; the meadows swim.
Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar; and, high above its banks,
The river lift; before whose rushing tide 339
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains,

* Founded on the story of Ruth.

Roll mingled down: all that the winds had spared
In one wild moment ruined; the big hopes,
And well-earned treasures of the painful year.
Fled to some eminence, the husbandman,
Helpless, beholds the miserable wreck
Driving along; his drowning ox at once
Descending, with his labours scattered round,
He sees; and instant o'er his shivering thought
Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
Of clamant children dear. Ye masters, then,
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease;
Be mindful of those limbs, in russet clad,
Whose toil to yours is warmth and graceful pride;
And, oh! be mindful of that sparing board,
Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice!
Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains
And all-involving winds have swept away.

Here the rude clamour of the sportsman's joy,
The gun fast-thundering, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the muse to sing the rural game:
How, in his mid-career, the spaniel struck
Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
Outstretched and finely sensible, draws full,
Fearful, and cautious, on the latent prey;
As in the sun the circling covey bask
Their varied plumes, and, watchful every way,
Through the rough stubble turn the secret eye.
Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat
Their idle wings, entangled more and more:
Nor on the surges of the boundless air,
Though borne triumphant, are they safe; the gun,

Glanced just and sudden, from the fowler's eye,
O'ertakes their sounding pinions: and again,
Immediate, brings them from the towering wing,
Dead to the ground; or drives them wide dispersed,
Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.
These are not subjects for the peaceful muse,
Nor will she stain with such her spotless song;
Then most delighted, when she social sees
The whole mixed animal creation round
Alive and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
This falsely cheerful, barbarous game of death,
This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth
Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn;
When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
Urged by necessity, had ranged the dark,
As if their conscious ravage shunned the light,
Ashamed. Not so the steady tyrant man,
Who, with the thoughtless insolence of power
Inflamed beyond the most infuriate wrath
Of the worst monster that e'er roamed the waste,
For sport alone pursues the cruel chase,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, our wanton rage,
For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty rolled,
To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
Is what your horrid bosoms never knew.

Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare!
Scared from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retired: the rushy fen; the ragged furze,
Stretched o'er the stony heath; the stubble chapped;
The thistly lawn; the thick-entangled broom;
Of the same friendly hue, the withered fern;

The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
Concoctive; and the nodding sandy bank,
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook.
Vain is her best precaution; though she sits
Concealed, with folded ears, unsleeping eyes,
By Nature raised to take the horizon in,
And head couched close betwixt her hairy feet,
In act to spring away. The scented dew
Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep,
In scattered sullen openings, far behind,
With every breeze she hears the coming storm.
But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
The sighing gale, she springs amazed, and all
The savage soul of game is up at once:
The pack full-opening, various; the shrill horn,
Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,
Wild for the chase; and the loud hunter's shout;
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Mixed in mad tumult and discordant joy.

The stag too, singled from the herd, where long
He ranged, the branching monarch of the shades,
Before the tempest drives. At first, in speed
He, sprightly, puts his faith; and, roused by fear,
Gives all his swift aërial soul to flight;
Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
To leave the lessening murderous cry behind:
Deception short! though, fleeter than the winds
Blown o'er the keen-aired mountain by the north,
He bursts the thickets, glances through the glades,
And plunges deep into the wildest wood;
If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track,
Hot-steaming, up behind him come again
The inhuman rout, and from the shady depth

Expel him, circling through his every shift.
He sweeps the forest oft; and, sobbing, sees
The glades, mild opening to the golden day;
Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.
Oft in the full-descending flood he tries
To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides:
Oft seeks the herd; the watchful herd, alarmed,
With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.
What shall he do? His once so vivid nerves,
So full of buoyant spirit, now no more
Inspire the course; but fainting breathless toil,
Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay
And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
The big round tears run down his dappled face;
He groans in anguish; while the growling pack,
Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
And mark his beauteous chequered sides with gore.
Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth,
Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
Must have the chase; behold, despising flight,
The roused up lion, resolute and slow,
Advancing full on the protended spear
And coward band, that, circling, wheel aloof.
Slunk from the cavern and the troubled wood,
See the grim wolf; on him, his shaggy foe,
Vindictive, fix, and let the ruffian die:
Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.
These Britain knows not; give, ye Britons, then
Your sportive fury, pitiless, to pour
Loose on the nightly robber of the fold;

Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearthed,
Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.
Throw the broad ditch behind you; o'er the hedge
High bound, resistless; nor the deep morass
Refuse, but through the shaking wilderness
Pick your nice way; into the perilous flood
Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full;
And, as you ride the torrent, to the banks
Your triumph sound, sonorous, running round,
From rock to rock, in circling echo tost;
Then scale the mountains to their woody tops;
Rush down the dangerous steep; and o'er the lawn,
In fancy swallowing up the space between,
Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
For happy he who tops the wheeling chase;
Has every maze evolved, and every guile
Disclosed; who knows the merits of the pack,
Who saw the villain seized, and dying hard,
Without complaint, though by a hundred mouths
Relentless torn. Oh! glorious he, beyond
His daring peers! when the retreating horn
Calls them to ghostly halls of gray renown,
With woodland honours graced; the fox's fur,
Depending, decent, from the roof: and spread
Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,
The stag's large front: he then is loudest heard,
When the night staggers with severer toils,
With feats Thessalian centaurs* never knew,
And their repeated wonders shake the dome.
But first the fuelled chimney blazes wide;

* The Centaurs, in Grecian mythology, were half men and half horses. They were supposed to inhabit Thessaly, a kingdom of Ancient Greece.

The tankards foam; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretched immense
From side to side; in which, with desperate knife,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of England's glory, ne'er to be defaced
While hence they borrow vigour: or amain
Into the pasty plunged, at intervals,
If stomach keen can intervals allow,
Relating all the glories of the chase.
Then sated hunger bids his brother thirst
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swelled high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, delicious, as the breath
Of Maia* to the love-sick shepherdess,
On violets diffused, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn,
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat
Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
Even with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, whist a while
Walks his grave round beneath a cloud of smoke,
Wreathed, fragrant, from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake
The sounding gammon: while romp-loving miss
Is hauled about, in gallantry robust.
At last these puling idlenesses laid
Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
Close in firm circle; and set, ardent, in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,

* A goddess to whom sacrifices were offered on the first of May.

Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulged apart; but earnest, brimming bowls
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,
To church or mistress, politics or ghost,
In endless mazes, intricate, perplexed.
Meantime, with sudden interruption, loud,
The impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart:
That moment touched is each congenial soul;
And, opening in a full-mouthed cry of joy,
The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse goes round;
While, from their slumbers shook, the kennelled hounds
Mix in the music of the day again.
As when the tempest, that has vexed the deep
The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls;
So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues
Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
Lie quite dissolved. Before their maudlin eyes,
Seen dim and blue, the double tapers dance,
Like the sun wading through the misty sky.
Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confused above,
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
As if the table even itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene; and wide, below,
Is heaped the social slaughter: where, astride,
The lubber power in filthy triumph sits,
Slumbrous, inclining still from side to side,
And steeps them drenched in potent sleep till morn.
Perhaps some doctor, of tremendous paunch,
Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,

Outlives them all; and from his buried flock
Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.
But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport
Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E'er stain the bosom of the British fair.
Far be the spirit of the chase from them!
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill;
To spring the fence, to reign the prancing steed;
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire;
In which they roughen to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe;
With every motion, every word, to wave
Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush;
And from the smallest violence to shrink,
Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears;
And by this silent adulation, soft,
To their protection more engaging man.
O may their eyes no miserable sight,
Save weeping lovers, see! a nobler game,
Through love's enchanting wiles pursued, yet fled,
In chase ambiguous. May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress!
And, fashioned all to harmony, alone
Know they to seize the captivated soul,
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips;
To teach the lute to languish; with smooth step,
Disclosing motion in its every charm,
To swim along, and swell the mazy dance;
To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page;
To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,

And heighten Nature's dainties: in their race,
To rear their graces into second life;
To give society its highest taste;
Well ordered home, man's best delight, to make;
And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
With every gentle care-eluding art,
To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
Even charm the pains to something more than joy,
And sweeten all the toils of human life:
This be the female dignity, and praise.
Ye swains, now hasten to the hazel bank;
Where, down yon dale, the wildly winding brook
Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array,
Fit for the thickets and the tangling shrub,
Ye virgins, come. For you their latest song
The woodlands raise; the clustering nuts for you
The lover finds amid the secret shade;
And, where they burnish on the topmost bough,
With active vigour crushes down the tree;
Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,
A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair:
Melinda, formed with every grace complete;
Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
And far transcending such a vulgar praise.
Hence from the busy joy-resounding fields,
In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
Of Autumn, unconfined; and taste, revived,
The breath of orchard big with bending fruit,
Obedient to the breeze and beating ray,
From the deep-loaded bough a mellow shower
Incessant melts away. The juicy pear
Lies, in a soft profusion, scattered round.

A various sweetness swells the gentle race;
By Nature's all-refining hand prepared;
Of tempered sun and water, earth and air,
In ever-changing composition mixed.
Such, falling frequent through the chiller night,
The fragrant stores, the wide-projected heaps
Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
Innumerous, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen,
Dwells in their gelid pores; and, active, points
The piercing cyder for the thirsty tongue:
Thy native theme, and boon inspirer too,
Phillips,* Pomona's† bard, the second thou
Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfettered verse,
With British freedom sing the British song:
How, from Silurian‡ vats, high-sparkling wines
Foam in transparent floods—some strong, to cheer
The wintry revels of the labouring hind,
And tasteful some, to cool the summer hours.

In this glad season, while his sweetest beams
The sun sheds equal o'er the meekened day;
Oh lose me in the green delightful walks
Of, Dodington! thy seat, serene and plain;
Where simple nature reigns; and every view,
Diffusive, spreads the pure Dorsetian downs,
In boundless prospect; yonder shagged with wood,
Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks!
Meantime the grandeur of thy lofty dome,

* John Phillips, son of archdeacon Phillips, born 1676, died 1708. The allusion is to a poem written by him in imitation of Virgil's Georgics, entitled *Cider*.

† See note on Summer, line 663.

‡ Herefordshire, famed for its cider, formed a part of the ancient division of Wales, called Siluria.

Far-splendid, seizes on the ravished eye.
New beauties rise with each revolving day;
New columns swell; and still the fresh Spring finds
New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
Full of thy genius all! the Muses' seat;
Where, in the secret bower and winding walk,
For virtuous Young* and thee they twine the bay.
Here wandering oft, fired with the restless thirst
Of thy applause, I solitary court
The inspiring breeze; and meditate the book
Of Nature, ever open; aiming thence,
Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
And, as I steal along the sunny wall,
Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep,
My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought:
Presents the downy peach, the shining plum,
With a fine blueish mist of animals
Clouded, the ruddy nectarine, and, dark
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots,
Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the south,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.

Turn we a moment fancy's rapid flight
To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent;
Where, by the potent sun elated high,
The vineyard swells refulgent on the day;
Spreads o'er the vale; or up the mountain climbs,
Profuse; and drinks amid the sunny rocks,
From cliff to cliff increased, the heightened blaze.
Low bend the weighty boughs. The clusters clear,
Half through the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
Or shine transparent; while perfection breathes,

* Dr. Edward Young, author of the *Night Thoughts*.

White o'er the turgent film, the living dew.
As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
Touched into flavour by the mingling ray;
The rural youth and virgins o'er the field,
Each fond for each, to cull the autumnal prime,
Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.
Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
And foams unbounded with the mashy flood;
That by degrees fermented, and refined,
Round the raised nations pours the cup of joy:
The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
The mellow-tasted Burgundy, and, quick
As is the wit it gives, the gay Champagne.
Now, by the cool declining year condensed,
Descend the copious exhalations, checked
As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides,
And high between contending kingdoms rears
The rocky long division, fills the view
With great variety; but in a night
Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense
Sinks dark and dreary. Thence expanding far,
The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain:
Vanish the woods: the dim-seen river seems
Sullen, and slow, to roll the misty wave.
Even in the height of noon oppressed, the sun
Sheds, weak and blunt, his wide-refracted ray;
Whence glaring oft, with many a broadened orb,
He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
Seen through the turbid air, beyond the life,

Objects appear; and, wildered, o'er the waste
The shepherd stalks gigantic; till at last
Wreathed dun around, in deeper circles still
Successive closing, sits the general fog
Unbounded o'er the world; and, mingling thick,
A formless grey confusion covers all.
As when of old (so sung the Hebrew bard)
Light, uncollected, through the chaos urged
Its infant way; nor order yet had drawn
His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.

These roving mists, that constant now begin
To smoke along the hilly country, these,
With weighty rains, and melted Alpine snows,
The mountain-cisterns fill,—those ample stores
Of water, scooped among the hollow rocks; [play,
Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains
And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw.
Some sages say, that, where the numerous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drilled through the sandy stratum, every way,
The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
Amid whose angles, infinitely strained,
They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten as they soak along.
Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,
Though oft amidst the irriguous vale it springs;
But to the mountain courted by the sand,
That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,
Far from the parent-main, it boils again
Fresh into day; and all the glittering hill
Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain
Amusive dream! why should the waters love
To take so far a journey to the hills,

When the sweet valleys offer to their toil
Inviting quiet, and a nearer bed?
Or if by blind ambition led astray,
They must aspire; why should they sudden stop
Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,
And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert
The attractive sand that charmed their course so long?
Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,
The spoil of ages, would impervious choke
Their secret channels; or, by slow degrees,
High as the hills protrude the swelling vales:
Old ocean too, sucked through the porous globe,
Had long ere now forsook his horrid bed,
And brought Deucalion's* watery times again.
Say then, where lurk the vast eternal springs,
That, like creating Nature, lie concealed
From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores
Refresh the globe, and all its joyous tribes?
O thou pervading genius, given to man
To trace the secrets of the dark abyss!
Oh! lay the mountains bare; and wide display
Their hidden structure to the astonished view;
Strip from the branching Alps their piny load;
The huge incumbrance of horrific woods
From Asian Taurus,† from Imaus‡ stretched
Athwart the roving Tartar's sullen bounds;
Give opening Hemus§ to my searching eye,

* Grecian mythology informs us that Deucalion, king of Thessaly, and his wife Pyrrha, were saved from the general deluge, and re-peopled the world.

† A range of mountains extending from the south of Asia Minor to mount Ararat.

‡ The Himalayan mountains.

§ A mountain in Thessaly.

And high Olympus,* pouring many a stream.
Oh! from the sounding summits of the north,
The Dofrine hills,† through Scandinavia rolled
To farthest Lapland and the frozen main;
From lofty Caucasus, far seen by those
Who in the Caspian and black Euxine toil;
From cold Riphean rocks, which the wild Russ
Believes the stony girdle‡ of the world;
And all the dreadful mountains, wrapped in storm,
Whence wide Siberia draws her lonely floods;
Oh! sweep the eternal snows hung o'er the deep,
That ever works beneath his sounding base,
Bid Atlas,§ propping heaven, as poets feign,
His subterranean wonders spread; unveil
The miny caverns, blazing on the day,
Of Abyssinia's cloud-compelling cliffs,
And of the bending Mountains of the Moon;‖
O'ertopping all these giant sons of earth,
Let the dire Andes, from the radiant line
Stretched to the stormy seas that thunder round
The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold.
Amazing scene! Behold! the glooms disclose;
I see the rivers in their infant beds;
Deep, deep I hear them, labouring to get free.
I see the leaning strata, artful ranged;
The gaping fissures to receive the rains,

* The mountain called by that name in the lesser Asia.—T.

† The highest of the mountain range of Sweden and Norway.

‡ The Moscovites call the Riphean mountains *Weliki Camenypoys*, that is, the great stony girdle; because they suppose them to encompass the whole earth.—T.

§ See note on Summer, line 938.

‖ A range of mountains in Africa that surround almost all Monomotapa.—T

The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs.
Strowed bibulous above I see the sands,
The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
The guttered rocks and mazy-running clefts;
That, while the stealing moisture they transmit,
Retard its motion, and forbid its waste.
Beneath the incessant weeping of these drains,
I see the rocky siphons stretched immense,
The mighty reservoirs, of hardened chalk,
Or stiff compacted clay, capacious formed:
O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
Through the stirred sands a bubbling passage burst;
And welling out, around the middle steep,
Or from the bottoms of the bosomed hills,
In pure effusion flow. United, thus,
The exhaling sun, the vapour-burdened air,
The gelid mountains, that, to rain condensed,
These vapours in continual current draw,
And send them, o'er the fair-divided earth,
In bounteous rivers to the deep again,
A social commerce hold, and, firm, support
The full-adjusted harmony of things.

When Autumn scatters his departing gleams,
Warned of approaching Winter, gathered, play
The swallow-people; and, tossed wide around,
O'er the calm sky, in convolution swift,
The feathered eddy floats: rejoicing once,
Ere to their wintry slumbers they retire;
In clusters clung, beneath the mouldering bank,
And where, unpierced by frost, the cavern sweats.
Or rather into warmer climes conveyed,

With other kindred birds of season, there
They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
Invite them welcome back; for, thronging, now
Innumerous wings are in commotion all.
Where the Rhine loses his majestic force
In Belgian plains, won from the raging deep
By diligence amazing, and the strong
Unconquerable hand of liberty,
The stork-assembly meets; for many a day,
Consulting deep and various, ere they take
Their arduous voyage through the liquid sky:
And now, their route designed, their leaders chose,
Their tribes adjusted, cleaned their vigorous wings,
And many a circle, many a short essay,
Wheeled round and round, in congregation full
The figured flight ascends; and, riding high
The aërial billows, mixes with the clouds.
Or where the Northern Ocean, in vast whirls,
Boils round the naked melancholy isles
Of farthest Thulè,* and the Atlantic surge
Pours in among the stormy Hebrides;
Who can recount what transmigrations there
Are annual made? what nations come and go?
And how the living clouds on clouds arise,
Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air
And rude resounding shore are one wild cry?
Here the plain harmless native his small flock,
And herd diminutive of many hues,
Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
The shepherds sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks
Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food;
Or sweeps the fishy shore; or treasures up

* See note on Summer, line 1168.

The plumage, rising full, to form the bed
Of luxury. And here a while the muse,
High hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia, in romantic view:
Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
Invested with a keen diffusive sky,
Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand
Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
Poured out extensive, and of watery wealth
Full; winding, deep and green, her fertile vales,
With many a cool translucent brimming flood
Washed lovely, from the Tweed (pure parent-stream,
Whose pastoral banks* first heard my Doric reed,
With, silvan Jed, thy tributary brook)
To where the north-inflated tempest foams
O'er Ørca's† or Betubium's‡ highest peak.
Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school
Trained up to hardy deeds; soon visited
By learning, when before the Gothic rage
She took her western flight. A manly race,
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise, and brave;
Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard,
(As well unhappy Wallace§ can attest,
Great patriot-hero! ill requited chief!)
To hold a generous, undiminished state;

* Ednam, the birthplace of Thomson, is in Roxburghshire, near the banks of the Tweed.

† The Orkney islands.

‡ A promontory in Scotland, now called the Cape of St. Andrew.

§ The celebrated William Wallace, son of Sir Malcolm Wallace of Elderslie. He was cruelly executed in West Smithfield, on the twenty-second of August, 1305.

Too much in vain! Hence of unequal bounds
Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
O'er every land, for every land their life
Has flowed profuse, their piercing genius planned,
And swelled the pomp of peace their faithful toil:
As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
Bright over Europe bursts the boreal morn.

Oh! is there not some patriot, in whose power
That best, that godlike luxury is placed,
Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
Through late posterity? some, large of soul,
To cheer dejected industry, to give
A double harvest to the pining swain,
And teach the labouring hand the sweets of toil?
How, by the finest art, the native robe
To weave; how, white as hyperborean snow,
To form the lucid lawn; with venturous oar
How to dash wide the billow; nor look on,
Shamefully passive, while Batavian fleets*
Defraud us of the glittering finny swarms,
That heave our friths, and crowd upon our shores;†
How all-enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
The prosperous sail, from every growing port,
Uninjured, round the sea-encircled globe;
And thus, in soul united as in name,
Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep!

Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,‡
Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast,

* Batavia was the ancient name of Holland.

† The herring fishery on the Scotch coast was formerly monopolized by the Dutch.

‡ John, second Duke of Argyle, born 1678, died 1743. He was distinguished both as a general and a statesman.

From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
Thy fond imploring country turns her eye;
In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
Her every virtue, every grace combined,
Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
Her pride of honour, and her courage tried,
Calm and intrepid in the very throat
Of sulphurous war, on Tenier's dreadful field.
Nor less the palm of peace inwreathes thy brow:
For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate;
While mixed in thee combine the charm of youth,
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
Thee, Forbes,* too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind;
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels through her reviving arts,
Planned by thy wisdom, by thy soul informed;
And seldom has she felt a friend like thee.

But see the fading many-coloured woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round
Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun,
Of every hue, from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome muse,
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks,
And give the season in its latest view.

Meantime, light shadowing all, a sober calm
Fleeces unbounded ether: whose least wave

* Duncan Forbes, born in 1685. He was distinguished as an advocate, was returned to parliament in 1722, became Lord Advocate in 1725, and of the Lords Justiciary in 1735, and in 1737 Lord President of the Court of Session; he died in 1747. He was a great patron of learning, and an enlightened statesman.

Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current: while, illumined wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And through their lucid veil his softened force
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
For those whom wisdom and whom nature charm
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet,
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
And woo lone quiet in her silent walks.
Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And through the saddened grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widowed songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings, through the tawny copse;
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swelled all the music of the swarming shades,
Robbed of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock!
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And naught save chattering discord in their note.
Oh! let not, aimed from some inhuman eye,
The gun the music of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground.
The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove;
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,

And slowly circles through the waving air.
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the withered waste, and whistle bleak.
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. Even what remained
Of bolder fruits falls from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the power
Of philosophic melancholy comes!
His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The softened feature, and the beating heart,
Pierced deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes;
Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied, and as high: devotion raised
To rapture, and divine astonishment;
The love of nature unconfined, and, chief,
Of human race; the large ambitious wish
To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth
Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
Of tyrant pride; the fearless great resolve;

The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
Inspiring glory through remotest time;
The awakened throb for virtue and for fame;
The sympathies of love, and friendship dear;
With all the social offspring of the heart.
Oh! bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To twilight groves, and visionary vales;
To weeping grottoes, and prophetic glooms;
Where angel forms athwart the solemn dusk,
Tremendous, sweep, or seem to sweep along;
And voices, more than human, through the void
Deep-sounding, seize the enthusiastic ear?
Or is this gloom too much? Then lead, ye Powers,
That o'er the garden and the rural seat
Preside, which, shining through the cheerful hand
In countless numbers, blest Britannia sees,
Oh! lead me to the wide extended walks,
The fair majestic paradise of Stowe.*
Not Persian Cyrus on Ionia's shore
E'er saw such sylvan scenes; such various art
By genius fired, such ardent genius tamed
By cool judicious art; that, in the strife,
All-beauteous Nature fears to be outdone.
And there, O Pitt!† thy country's early boast,
There let me sit beneath the sheltered slopes,
Or in that temple‡ where, in future times,
Thou well shalt merit a distinguished name;
And, with thy converse blest, catch the last smiles
Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.
While there with thee the enchanted round I walk,

* The seat of Lord Viscount Cobham.—T.
† William Pitt, first Earl of Chatham.
‡ The Temple of Virtue in Stowe Gardens.—T.

The regulated wild, gay fancy then
Will tread in thought the groves of attic land;
Will from thy standard taste refine her own,
Correct her pencil to the purest truth
Of Nature, or, the unimpassioned shades
Forsaking, raise it to the human mind.
Or if hereafter she, with juster hand,
Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her, thou,
To mark the varied movements of the heart,
What every decent character requires,
And every passion speaks. Oh! through her strain,
Breathe thy pathetic eloquence, that moulds
The attentive senate, charms, persuades, exalts,
Of honest zeal the indignant lightning throws,
And shakes corruption on her venal throne.
While thus we talk, and through Elysian vales
Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes:
What pity, Cobham!* thou thy verdant files
Of ordered trees shouldst here inglorious range,
Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
And long embattled hosts! when the proud foe,
The faithless vain disturber of mankind,
Insulting Gaul, has roused the world to war;
When keen, once more, within their bounds to press
Those polished robbers, those ambitious slaves,
The British youth would hail thy wise command,
Thy tempered ardour and thy veteran skill.

The western sun withdraws the shortened day;
And humid evening, gliding o'er the sky,
In her chill progress, to the ground condensed
The vapours throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,

* Sir Richard Temple, created Lord Cobham in 1714.

Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
The dusky-mantled lawn. Meanwhile the moon,
Full-orbed and breaking through the scattered clouds,
Shows her broad visage in the crimsoned east.
Turned to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller earth, gives all his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.

But when, half blotted from the sky, her light,
Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
With keener lustre through the depth of heaven;
Or near extinct her deadened orb appears,
And scarce appears, of sickly, beamless white;
Oft in this season, silent from the north
A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
Relapsing quick, as quickly re-ascend,
And mix, and thwart, extinguish, and renew,
All ether coursing in a maze of light.

From look to look, contagious through the crowd,
The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes
The appearance throws: armies in meet array,
Thronged with aërial spears, and steeds of fire;

Till, the long lines of full-extended war
In bleeding fight commixed, the sanguine flood
Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.
As thus they scan the visionary scene,
On all sides swells the superstitious din,
Incontinent; and busy frenzy talks
Of blood and battle; cities overturned,
And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,
Or, hideous, wrapt in fierce ascending flame;
Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;
Of pestilence, and every great distress;
Empires subversed, when ruling fate has struck
The unalterable hour: even Nature's self
Is deemed to totter on the brink of time.
Not so the man of philosophic eye,
And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
Curious surveys, inquisitive to know
The causes and materials, yet unfixed,
Of this appearance beautiful and new.
Now black and deep, the night begins to fall,
A shade immense! Sunk in the quenching gloom,
Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth.
Order confounded lies; all beauty void;
Distinction lost; and gay variety
One universal blot: such the fair power
Of light to kindle and create the whole.
Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
Who then, bewildered, wanders through the dark,
Full of pale fancies, and chimeras huge;
Nor visited by one directive ray,
From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.
Perhaps, impatient as he stumbles on,
Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue,

The wild-fire scatters round, or, gathered, trails
A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss:
Whither decoyed by the fantastic blaze,
Now lost and now renewed, he sinks absorbed,
Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf;
While still, from day to day, his pining wife
And plaintive children his return await,
In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
Sent by the better genius of the night,
Innoxious, gleaming on the horse's mane,
The meteor sits;* and shows the narrow path
That, winding, leads through pits of death, or else
Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthened night elapsed, the morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.
And now the mounting sun dispels the fog;
The rigid hoar frost melts before his beam;
And hung on every spray, on every blade
Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.

Ah! see where, robbed and murdered, in that pit
Lies the still heaving hive; at evening snatched,
Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
And fixed o'er sulphur: while, not dreaming ill,
The happy people, in their waxen cells,
Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes
Of temperance, for winter poor; rejoiced
To mark, full flowing round, their copious stores.
Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends;
And, used to milder scents, the tender race,
By thousands tumble from their honeyed domes,
Convolved, and agonizing in the dust.

* The *Ignis Fatuus*, or Will-o'-the-Wisp.

And was it then for this you roamed the Spring,
Intent, from flower to flower? for this you toiled
Ceaseless the burning summer-heats away?
For this in Autumn searched the blooming waste,
Nor lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate?
O Man! tyrannic lord! how long, how long
Shall prostrate Nature groan beneath your rage,
Awaiting renovation? When obliged,
Must you destroy? Of their ambrosial food
Can you not borrow; and, in just return,
Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
Again regale them on some smiling day?"
See where the stony bottom of their town
Looks desolate and wild; with here and there
A helpless number, who the ruined state
Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.
Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
Full of the works of peace, and high in joy,
At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep,
(As late, Palermo, was thy fate) is seized
By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurled,
Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involved,
Into a gulf of blue sulphureous flame.

Hence every harsher sight. For now the day,
O'er heaven and earth diffused, grows warm and high;
Infinite splendour! wide-investing all.
How still the breeze! save what the filmy thread
Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain.
How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply tinged
With a peculiar blue! the ethereal arch,
How swelled immense! amid whose azure throned
The radiant sun how gay! how calm below,

The gilded earth! the harvest-treasures all
Now gathered in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
And instant Winter's utmost rage defied:
While, loose to festive joy, the country round
Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth;
Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth,
By the quick sense of music taught alone,
Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.
Her every charm abroad, the village-toast,
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,
Darts not-unmeaning looks; and where her eye
Points an approving smile, with double force
The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines.
Age too shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think
That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Oh! knew he but his happiness, of men
The happiest he; who far from public rage
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired,
Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life.
What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of flatterers false, and in their turn abused?
Vile intercourse! What though the glittering robe
Of every hue reflected light can give,
Or floating loose, or stiff with massy gold,
The pride and gaze of fools! oppress him not?
What though, from utmost land and sea purveyed,
For him each rarer tributary life
Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps
With luxury and death? What though his bowl

Flames not with costly juice; nor, sunk in beds,
Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state?
What though he knows not those fantastic joys
That still amuse the wanton, still deceive—
A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain—
Their hollow moments undelighted all?
Sure peace is his; a solid life, estranged
To disappointment and fallacious hope:
Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
In herbs and fruits; whatever greens the Spring,
When heaven descends in showers; or bends the bough
When Summer reddens, and when Autumn beams;
Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies
Concealed, and fattens with the richest sap:
These are not wanting; nor the milky drove,
Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay;
Nor aught besides of prospect, grove, or song,
Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear.
Here too dwells simple truth, plain innocence,
Unsullied beauty, sound unbroken youth,
Patient of labour, with a little pleased,
Health ever-blooming, unambitious toil,
Calm contemplation, and poetic ease.

Let others brave the flood in quest of gain,
And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
Let such as deem it glory to destroy,
Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek;

Unpierced, exulting in the widow's wail,
The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.
Let some, far distant from their native soil;
Urged or by want or hardened avarice,
Find other lands beneath another sun.
Let this through cities work his eager way,
By legal outrage and established guile,
The social sense extinct; and that ferment
Mad into tumult the seditious herd,
Or melt them down to slavery. Let these
Insnare the wretched in the toils of law,
Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
An iron race! and those of fairer front,
But equal inhumanity, in courts,
Delusive pomp, and dark cabals, delight;
Wreathe the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile,
And tread the weary labyrinth of state.
While he, from all the stormy passions free
That restless men involve, hears, and but hears,
At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
Wrapped close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
Move not the man, who, from the world escaped,
In still retreats and flowery solitudes,
To Nature's voice attends, from month to month,
And day to day, through the revolving year;
Admiring, sees her in her every shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more.
He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
Into his freshened soul; her genial hours
He full enjoys; and not a beauty blows,

And not an opening blossom breathes, in vain.
In Summer he, beneath the living shade,
Such as o'er frigid Tempè* wont to wave,
Or Hemus† cool, reads what the muse, of these
Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung;
Or, what she dictates, writes: and oft, an eye
Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world,
And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
Seized by the general joy, his heart distends
With gentle throes: and, through the tepid gleams
Deep-musing, then he best exerts his song.
Even Winter wild to him is full of bliss.
The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
Abrupt and deep, stretched o'er the buried earth,
Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies,
Disclosed and kindled by refining frost,
Pour every lustre on the exalted eye.
A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,
O'er land and sea imagination roams;
Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
Elates his being, and unfolds his powers;
Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.
The touch of kindred too and love he feels;
The modest eye, whose beams on his alone
Ecstatic shine; the little strong embrace
Of prattling children, twined around his neck,
And emulous to please him, calling forth
The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns:

* A celebrated vale or ravine in Thessaly.
† A mountain in Thessaly.

For happiness and true philosophy
Are of the social still, and smiling kind.
This is the life which those who fret in guilt,
And guilty cities, never knew; the life,
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with man!
O Nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works;
Snatch me to Heaven; thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent,
Profusely scattered o'er the blue immense,
Show me; their motions, periods, and their laws
Give me to scan; through the disclosing deep
Light my blind way: the mineral strata there;
Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world;
O'er that the rising system, more complex,
Of animals; and, higher still, the mind,—
The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
And where the mixing passions endless shift;
These ever open to my ravished eye:
A search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust!
But if to that unequal; if the blood,
In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
That best ambition; under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook,
And whisper to my dreams. From Thee begin,
Dwell all on Thee, with Thee conclude my song;
And let me never, never stray from Thee!

# WINTER.

## THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Address to the Earl of Wilmington. First approach of Winter. According to the natural course of the season, various storms described. Rain. Wind. Snow. The driving of the snows: a man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life. The wolves descending from the Alps and Apennines. A winter evening described: as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city. Frost. A view of Winter within the polar circle. A thaw. The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

# WINTER.

SEE, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train—
Vapours, and Clouds, and Storms. Be these my theme;
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleased have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nursed by careless solitude I lived,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleased have I wandered through your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst:
Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brewed
In the grim evening-sky. Thus passed the time,
Till through the lucid chambers of the south

Looked out the joyous Spring; looked out, and smiled.
To thee, the patron of this *first* essay,
The muse, O Wilmington!* renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year:
Skimmed the gay Spring; on eagle-pinions borne,
Attempted through the Summer blaze to rise;
Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale;
And now among the wintry clouds again,
Rolled in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds;
To suit her sounding cadence to the floods;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice happy, could she fill thy judging ear
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skilled in awful schemes alone,
And how to make a mighty people thrive;
But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul,
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing, for thy country's weal—
A steady spirit, regularly free;
These, each exalting each, the statesman light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.
Now, when the cheerless empire of the sky
To Capricorn the Centaur-Archer yields,†
And fierce Aquarius stains the inverted year;

* Sir Spencer Compton, created Baron Wilmington in 1727, and Viscount Pevensey and Earl of Wilmington in 1730. He was Speaker of the House of Commons during part of the premiership of Sir Robert Walpole; died 1743.—This eulogy was substituted by Thomson for the epistolary dedication written by Mallet which appeared in the first edition.

† The twenty-first of December.

Hung o'er the farthest verge of heaven, the sun
Scarce spreads o'er ether the dejected day.
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Through the thick air; as, clothed in cloudy storm,
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And, soon-descending, to the long dark night,
Wide-shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
Nor is the night unwished; while vital heat,
Light, life, and joy, the dubious day forsake.
Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
Deep-tinged and damp, and congregated clouds,
And all the vapoury turbulence of Heaven,
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom oppressive o'er the world,
Through Nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease.
The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrowed land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun-discoloured flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan,
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.

Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
Drive through the mingling skies with vapour foul,
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods,
That grumbling wave below. The unsightly plain

Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still
Combine, and, deepening into night, shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,
Each to his home, retire; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from the untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the household feathery people crowd—
The crested cock, with all his female train,
Pensive and dripping; while the cottage hind
Hangs o'er the enlivening blaze, and taleful there
Recounts his simple frolic: much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swelled,
And the mixed ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the roused-up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrained
Between two meeting hills, it bursts away,
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There, gathering triple force, rapid, and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.

Nature! great parent! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic, are thy works!

With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul,
That sees astonished; and astonished sings!
Ye too, ye Winds! that now begin to blow,
With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings! say,
Where your aërial magazines, reserved
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm?
In what far-distant region of the sky,
Hushed in deep silence, sleep you when 'tis calm?
When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stained; red fiery streaks
Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey; while rising slow,
Blank, in the leaden-coloured east, the moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
Seen through the turbid, fluctuating air,
The stars obtuse emit a shivering ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
Snatched in short eddies, plays the withered leaf;
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broadened nostrils to the sky upturned,
The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
E'en as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread,
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They picked their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight

And seek the closing shelter of the grove.
Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal pressed, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
That solemn-sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discoloured deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lashed into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn.
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swelled, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchored navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at land the loosened tempest reigns.
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vexed, and sheds
What of its tarnished honours yet remain;
Dashed down, and scattered, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And on the cottage thatched, or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.
Then too, they say, through all the burdened air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, uttered by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.

Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds, commixed
With stars swift-gliding, sweep along the sky.
All Nature reels: till nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm;
Then straight air, sea, and earth, are hushed at once.

As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious night,
And contemplation, her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off the intrusive cares of day,

And lay the meddling senses all aside.
Where now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are you now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse:
Sad, sickening thought! and yet deluded man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,
And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,
With new-flushed hopes, to run the giddy round.
Father of light and life! thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good! teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure—
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!
The keener tempests come; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congealed.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Through the hushed air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherished fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun,
Faint from the west, emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide

The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands covered o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad-dispersed,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.

Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind,
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict: for, from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
In one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,

The billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urged,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipped with a wreath high-curling in the sky.
As thus the snows arise, and, foul and fierce,
All Winter drives along the darkened air,
In his own loose-revolving fields, the swain
Disastered stands; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain;
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray;
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fills his heart!
When for the dusky spot, which fancy feigned
His tufted cottage, rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blessed abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of covered pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smoothed up with snow; and, what is land unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh, or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.

These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks,
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mixed with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man—
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him the officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows, a stiffened corse,
Stretched out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;
Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel, this very moment, death
And all the sad variety of pain.
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame. How many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt man and man.
How many pine in want, and dungeon-glooms;
Shut from the common air and common use
Of their own limbs. How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierced by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut

Of cheerless poverty. How many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse;
Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.
E'en in the vale, where wisdom loves to dwell,
With friendship, peace, and contemplation joined,
How many, racked with honest passions, droop
In deep retired distress. How many stand
Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
And point the parting anguish. Thought, fond man,
Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life,
One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate,
Vice in his high career would stand appalled,
And heedless rambling impulse learn to think;
The conscious heart of charity would warm,
And her wide wish benevolence dilate;
The social tear would rise, the social sigh;
And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.

And here can I forget the generous band,*
Who, touched with human woe, redressive searched
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?
Unpitied, and unheard, where misery moans;
Where sickness pines; where thirst and hunger burn,
And poor misfortune feels the lash of vice.
While in the land of liberty, the land
Whose every street and public meeting glow
With open freedom, little tyrants raged;
Snatched the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tattered weed;

* The Jail Committee in the year 1729.—T.

Even robbed them of the last of comforts, sleep;
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chained,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevailed,
At pleasure marked him with inglorious stripes;
And crushed out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
That for their country would have toiled, or bled.
O great design! if executed well,
With patient care, and wisdom-tempered zeal.
Ye sons of mercy! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod,
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Much still untouched remains; in this rank age,
Much is the patriot's weeding hand required.
The toils of law, (what dark insidious men
Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth,
And lengthen simple justice into trade)
How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
And every man within the reach of right!

By wintry famine roused, from all the tract
Of horrid mountains which the shining Alps,
And wavy Appennines, and Pyrenees,
Branch out stupendous into distant lands,
Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave!
Burning for blood, bony, and gaunt, and grim!
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend;
And, pouring o'er the country, bear along,
Keen as the north-wind sweeps the glossy snow.
All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.
Nor can the bull his awful front defend,
Or shake the murdering savages away.
Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,

And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
The godlike face of man avails him naught.
Even Beauty, force divine! at whose bright glance
The generous lion stands in softened gaze,
Here bleeds, a hapless undistinguished prey.
But if, apprized of the severe attack,
The country be shut up, lured by the scent,
On churchyards drear (inhuman to relate!)
The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
The shrouded body from the grave; o'er which,
Mixed with foul shades and frighted ghosts, they howl.

Among those hilly regions, where, embraced
In peaceful vales, the happy Grisons dwell,
Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
Mountains of snow their gathering terrors roll.
From steep to steep, loud-thundering, down they come,
A wintry waste in dire commotion all;
And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains,
And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops
Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelmed.

Now, all amid the rigours of the year,
In the wild depth of winter, while, without,
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat
Between the groaning forest and the shore,
Beat by the boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, sheltered, solitary scene;
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join
To cheer the gloom. There, studious, let me sit,
And hold high converse with the mighty dead;
Sages of ancient time, as gods revered,

As gods beneficent, who blessed mankind
With arts and arms, and humanized a world.
Roused at the inspiring thought, I throw aside
The long-lived volume; and, deep-musing, hail
The sacred shades, that, slowly rising, pass
Before my wondering eyes. First Socrates,
Who, firmly good in a corrupted state,
Against the rage of tyrants single stood,
Invincible; calm reason's holy law,
That Voice of God within the attentive mind,
Obeying, fearless, or in life, or death:
Great moral teacher! Wisest of mankind!
Solon the next, who built his common-weal
On equity's wide base; by tender laws
A lively people curbing, yet undamped
Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
Whence in the laurelled field of finer arts
And of bold freedom, they unequalled shone—
The pride of smiling Greece, and human-kind.
Lycurgus then, who bowed beneath the force
Of strictest discipline, severely wise,
All human passions. Following him, I see,
As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
The firm devoted chief,* who proved by deeds
The hardest lesson which the other taught.
Then Aristides lifts his honest front;
Spotless of heart, to whom the unflattering voice
Of freedom gave the noblest name of Just;
In pure majestic poverty revered;
Who, even his glory to his country's weal

* Leonidas.—T. King of Sparta, who defended the pass of Thermopylæ against the whole Persian army under Xerxes, B. C. 480.

Submitting, swelled a haughty rival's* fame.
Reared by his care, of softer ray appears
Cimon, sweet-souled; whose genius, rising strong,
Shook off the load of young debauch; abroad
The scourge of Persian pride, at home the friend
Of every worth and every splendid art;
Modest, and simple, in the pomp of wealth.
Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
Late-called to glory, in unequal times,
Pensive, appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
Timeleon, tempered happy, mild, and firm,
Who wept the brother while the tyrant bled,
And, equal to the best, the Theban pair,†
Whose virtues, in heroic concord joined,
Their country raised to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom Athenian honour sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind,—
Phocion the Good; in public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet peace and happy wisdom smoothed his brow,
Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind.
And he, the last of old Lycurgus' sons,
The generous victim to that vain attempt
To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw
Even Sparta's self to servile avarice sunk.

* Themistocles.—T. Although Themistocles assisted in procuring the banishment of Aristides, the latter, after his recal, exerted himself to raise Themistocles to the highest influence in the state, sacrificing his private feeling to the public good.

† Pelopidas and Epaminondas.—T. Celebrated Theban generals, who acquired for their state the supremacy of Greece, B. C. 362.

The two Achaian heroes close the train:
Aratus, who awhile relumed the soul
Of fondly lingering liberty in Greece;
And he her darling as her latest hope,
The gallant Philopemon, who to arms
Turned the luxurious pomp he could not cure:
Or toiling in his farm, a simple swain;
Or, bold and skilful, thundering in the field.
Of rougher front, a mighty people come!
A race of heroes! in those virtuous times
Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame
Their dearest country they too fondly loved.
Her better founder first, the light of Rome,
Numa, who softened her rapacious sons:
Servius the king, who laid the solid base
On which o'er earth the vast republic spread.
Then the great consuls venerable rise.
The public father* who the private quelled,
As on the dread tribunal sternly sad.
He, whom his thankless country could not lose,
Camillus, only vengeful to her foes.
Fabricius, scorner of all-conquering gold;
And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough.
Thy willing victim,† Carthage, bursting loose
From all that pleading nature could oppose,

* Marcus Junius Brutus.—T. One of the first Roman consuls. His two sons, Litus and Tiberius, were tried and condemned by him for participating in a conspiracy to restore Tarquinius, and then scourged and beheaded in his presence.

† Regulus.—T. Marcus Attilius Regulus, a Roman general, who was taken prisoner by the Carthaginians. He was sent to Rome with some Carthaginian ambassadors, B.C. 250, to negotiate a peace, which involved his own liberation; but he exhorted his countrymen to refuse the terms, and returned to Carthage in chains, where he soon afterwards died.

From a whole city's tears, by rigid faith
Imperious called, and honour's dire command.
Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
Who soon the race of spotless glory ran,
And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade
With friendship and philosophy retired.
Tully, whose powerful eloquence a while
Restrained the rapid fate of rushing Rome.
Unconquered Cato, virtuous in extreme.
And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
Whose steady arm, by awful virtue urged,
Lifted the Roman steel against thy friend.
Thousands, besides, the tribute of a verse
Demand; but who can count the stars of Heaven?
Who sing their influence on this lower world?
Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state,
Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun:
'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan Swain.
Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of Song! and equal by his side,
The British Muse: * joined hand in hand they walk,
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades, whose skilful touch
Pathetic drew the impassioned heart, and charmed
Transported Athens with the moral scene; †
Nor those who, tuneful, waked the enchanting lyre.
First of your kind! society divine!
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserved,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely power! the door be thine;
See on the hallowed hour that none intrude,
Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign

* Shakespeare. † Æschylus and Aristophanes.

To bless my humble roof, with sense refined,
Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudied wit, and humour ever gay.
Or from the muses' hill will Pope descend,
To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
And with the social spirit warm the heart?
For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.

Where art thou, Hammond?* thou, the darling
The friend and lover of the tuneful throng! [pride,
Ah! why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
Of vernal genius, where, disclosing fast,
Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
Why wert thou ravished from our hope so soon?
What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
Which stung thy fervent breast? that treasured store
Of knowledge early gained? that eager zeal
To serve thy country, glowing in the band
Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name?
What now, alas! that life-diffusing charm
Of sprightly wit? that rapture for the muse,
That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile?
Ah! only showed, to check our fond pursuits,
And teach our humbled hopes that life is vain.

Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
The winter-glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspired:
With them would search, if nature's boundless frame

* James Hammond, Equerry to Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of Anthony Hammond, Esq. of Somersham-place, Buckinghamshire. He was born in 1710, and died, at the early age of thirty-two years, in 1742.

Was called, late-rising from the void of night,
Or sprung eternal from the Eternal Mind;
Its life, its laws, its progress, and its end.
Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
Would, gradual, open on our opening minds;
And each diffusive harmony unite
In full perfection, to the astonished eye.
Then would we try to scan the moral world,
Which, though to us it seems embroiled, moves on
In higher order; fitted and impelled
By wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In general good. The sage historic muse
Should next conduct us through the deeps of time:
Show us how empire grew, declined, and fell,
In scattered states; what makes the nations smile,
Improves their soil, and gives them double suns;
And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,
In Nature's richest lap. As thus we talked,
Our hearts would burn within us, would inhale
That portion of divinity, that ray
Of purest Heaven, which lights the public soul
Of patriots and of heroes. But if doomed,
In powerless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul;
Then, even superior to ambition, we
Would learn the private virtues; how to glide
Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life; or, snatched away by hope,
Through the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes
Of happiness and wonder, where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.

But when with these the serious thought is foiled,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes
Of frolic fancy; and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never joined before,
Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise;
Or folly-painting humour, grave himself,
Calls laughter forth, deep-shaking every nerve.
Meantime the village rouses up the fire:
While well attested, and as well believed,
Heard solemn, goes the goblin story round,
Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all.
Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round;
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleased; the long loud laugh, sincere;
The kiss, snatched hasty from the side-long maid,
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep;
The leap, the slap, the haul; and, shook to notes
Of native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the winter-night.
The city swarms intense. The public haunt,
Full of each theme, and warm with mixed discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy,
To swift destruction. On the rankled soul
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf
Of total ruin, honour, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mixed and evolved, a thousand sprightly ways.
The glittering court effuses every pomp;
The circle deepens; beamed from gaudy robes,

Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves:
While, a gay insect in his summer-shine,
The fop, light-fluttering, spreads his mealy wings.
Dread o'er the scene, the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Terror alarms the breast; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek: or else the comic muse
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.
Sometimes she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous Bevil* showed.
O thou, whose wisdom, solid yet refined,
Whose patriot-virtues, and consummate skill
To touch the finer springs that move the world,
Joined to whate'er the Graces can bestow,
And all Apollo's animating fire,
Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine—
At once the guardian, ornament, and joy,
Of polished life; permit the rural muse,
O Chesterfield! to grace with thee her song.
Ere to the shades again she humbly flies,
Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train,
(For every muse has in thy train a place)
To mark thy various full-accomplished mind:
To mark that spirit, which, with British scorn,
Rejects the allurements of corrupted power;
That elegant politeness, which excels,
Even in the judgment of presumptuous France,

* A character in "*The Conscious Lovers*," by Sir R. Steele.—T.

The boasted manners of her shining court;
That wit, the vivid energy of sense,
The truth of nature, which, with Attic point
And kind well-tempered satire, smoothly keen,
Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
Oh! let me hail thee on some glorious day,
When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd
Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
Then dressed by thee, more amiably fair,
Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears:
Thou to assenting reason givest again
Her own enlightened thoughts; called from the heart,
The obedient passions on thy voice attend;
And even reluctant party feels a while
Thy gracious power: as through the varied maze
Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
Profound and clear, you roll the copious flood.

To thy loved haunt return, my happy muse:
For now, behold! the joyous Winter days,
Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
For sight too fine, the ethereal nitre flies;
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air
Storing afresh with elemental life.
Close crowds the shining atmosphere; and binds
Our strengthened bodies in its cold embrace,
Constringent; feeds, and animates our blood;
Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves,
In swifter sallies darting to the brain—
Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
All nature feels the renovating force
Of Winter; only to the thoughtless eye

In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
Draws in abundant vegetable soul,
And gathers vigour for the coming year;
A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
Of ruddy fire: and luculent along
The purer rivers flow; their sullen deeps,
Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.
What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Derived, thou secret all-invading power,
Whom even the illusive fluid cannot fly?
Is not thy potent energy, unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hooked, or shaped
Like double wedges, and diffused, immense,
Through water, earth, and ether? hence at eve,
Steamed eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffused,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
Arrests the bickering stream. The loosened ice,
Let down the flood, and half dissolved by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone,
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
Cemented firm; till, seized from shore to shore,
The whole imprisoned river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and, hard, reflects
A double noise; while, at his evening watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant water-fall
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,

Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope
Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes nature fast. It freezes on;
Till morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world,
Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle; the frost-work fair,
Where transient hues, and fancied figures rise;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave;
And by the frost refined the whiter snow,
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
Pleased with the slippery surface, swift descends.

On blithsome frolics bent, the youthful swains,
While every work of man is laid at rest,
Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport
And revelry dissolved; where mixing glad,
Happiest of all the train! the raptured boy
Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the Rhine
Branched out in many a long canal extends,
From every province swarming, void of care,
Batavia rushes forth; and as they sweep,
On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
In circling poise, swift as the winds, along,
The then gay land is maddened all to joy.

Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
The long-resounding course. Meantime, to raise
The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
Flushed by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
Or Russia's buxom daughters, glow around.
Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
But soon elapsed. The horizontal sun,
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon;
And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff.
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale
Relents awhile to the reflected ray;
Or from the forest falls the clustered snow,
Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
Thunders the sport of those who with the gun,
And dog impatient bounding at the shot,
Worse than the season, desolate the fields;
And, adding to the ruins of the year,
Distress the footed or the feathered game.
But what is this? our infant Winter sinks,
Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
Astonished shoot into the frigid zone;
Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glittering waste her starry reign.
There, through the prison of unbounded wilds,
Barred by the hand of Nature from escape,
Wide roams the Russian exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but deserts lost in snow,
And heavy-loaded groves, and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,

Their icy horrors to the frozen main;
And cheerless towns far distant, never blessed,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,*
With news of human-kind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherished there, beneath the shining waste,
The furry nations harbour: tipped with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables, of glossy black; and dark-embrowned,
Or beauteous freaked with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.
There, warm together pressed, the trooping deer
Sleep on the new-fallen snows; and, scarce his head
Raised o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumbering sullen in the white abyss.
The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils,
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful, flying race; with ponderous clubs,
As, weak, against the mountain-heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and, piteous, bray,
He lays them quivering on the ensanguined snows,
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.
There, through the piny forest half-absorpt,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,
With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;
Slow-paced, and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath the inclement drift,
And, with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.

Wide o'er the spacious regions of the north,
That see Boötes† urge his tardy wain,

* The old name for China.—T.

† A small star near the Great Bear.—T.

A boisterous race, by frosty Caurus* pierced,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,
Prolific swarm. They once relumed the flame
Of lost mankind in polished slavery sunk;
Drove martial horde on horde,† with dreadful sweep,
Resistless, rushing o'er the enfeebled south,
And gave the vanquished world another form.
Not such the sons of Lapland: wisely they
Despise the insensate barbarous trade of war;
They ask no more than simple Nature gives;
They love their mountains, and enjoy their storms.
No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their time;
And, through the restless ever-tortured maze
Of pleasure, or ambition, bid it rage.
Their reindeer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply, their wholesome fare, and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heaped into one expanse
Of marbled snow, or far as eye can sweep
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glazed.
By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake
A waving blaze refracted o'er the heavens,
And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
With double lustre from the radiant waste,
Even in the depth of polar night, they find
A wondrous day—enough to light the chase,
Or guide their daring steps to Finland fairs.
Wished Spring returns; and, from the hazy south,

* The north-west wind.—T.
† The wandering Scythian clans.—T.

While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months,
Still, round and round, his spiral course he winds,
And as he nearly dips his flaming orb,
Wheels up again, and re-ascends the sky.
In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
Where pure Niëmi's* fairy mountains rise,
And, fringed with roses, Tenglio† rolls his stream,
They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
They, cheerful, loaded to their tents repair;
Where, all day long in useful cares employed,
Their kind unblemished wives the fire prepare.
Thrice happy race! by poverty secured
From legal plunder and rapacious power;
In whom fell interest never yet has sown
The seeds of vice; whose spotless swains ne'er knew
Injurious deed, nor, blasted by the breath
Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.
Still pressing on, beyond Tornéa's lake,
And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
And farthest Greenland, to the pole itself,

* M. de Maupertuis, in his book on the Figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niëmi, in Lapland, says, "From this height we had occasion several times to see those vapours rise from the lake, which the people of the county call Haltios, and which they deem to be the guardian spirits of the mountains. We had been frighted with stories of bears that haunted this place, but saw none. It seemed rather a place of resort for fairies and genii, than bears."—T.

† The same author observes, "I was surprised to see upon the banks of this river (the Tenglio) roses of as lively a red as any that are in our gardens."—T.

Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out,
The muse expands her solitary flight;
And, hovering o'er the wild stupendous scene,
Beholds new seas beneath another sky.*
Throned in his palace of cerulean ice,
Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court;
And through his airy hall the loud misrule
Of driving tempest is for ever heard:
Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath;
Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;
Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows,
With which he now oppresses half the globe.

Thence winding eastward to the Tartar's coast,
She sweeps the howling margin of the main;
Where undissolving, from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky;
And icy mountains high on mountains piled,
Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge and horrid, o'er the surge,
Alps frown on alps; or rushing hideous down,
As if old chaos was again returned,
Wide-rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
Ocean itself no longer can resist
The binding fury; but, in all its rage
Of tempest taken by the boundless frost,
Is many a fathom to the bottom chained,
And bid to roar no more: a bleak expanse,
Shagged o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless, and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conscious southward. Miserable they!
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,

* The other hemisphere.—T.

Take their last look of the descending sun;
While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long, long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's* fate,
As with first prow, (what have not Britons dared!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous nature with eternal bars.
In these fell regions, in Arzina caught,
And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate sealed, he with his hapless crew,
Each full-exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm.
Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing stream
Rolls the wild Oby, live the last of men;
And half-enlivened by the distant sun,
That rears and ripens man, as well as plants,
Here human nature wears its rudest form.
Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
They waste the tedious gloom. Immersed in furs,
Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
Nor tenderness, they know; nor aught of life,
Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without.
Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,
Sheds a long twilight brightening o'er their fields,
And calls the quivered savage to the chase.
What cannot active government perform,
New-moulding man? Wide-stretching from these shores,
A people savage from remotest time,

* Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Queen Elizabeth to discover the north-east passage.—T.

A huge neglected empire, one vast mind,
By Heaven inspired, from gothic darkness called.
Immortal Peter! first of monarchs! He
His stubborn country tamed, her rocks, her fens,
Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons;
And while the fierce barbarian he subdued,
To more exalted soul he raised the man.
Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toiled
Through long successive ages to build up
A labouring plan of state, behold at once
The wonder done! behold the matchless prince!
Who left his native throne, where reigned till then
A mighty shadow of unreal power;
Who greatly spurned the slothful pomp of courts;
And roaming every land, in every port
His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
Unwearied plying the mechanic tool,
Gathered the seeds of trade, of useful arts,
Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.
Charged with the stores of Europe home he goes!
Then cities rise amid the illumined waste;
O'er joyless deserts smiles the rural reign;
Far-distant flood to flood is social joined;
The astonished Euxine hears the Baltic roar;
Proud navies ride on seas that never foamed
With daring keel before; and armies stretch
Each way their dazzling files, repressing here
The frantic Alexander of the north,*
And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,
Of old dishonour proud: it glows around,
Taught by the royal hand that roused the whole,

* Charles the Twelfth, King of Sweden.

One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade:
For what his wisdom planned, and power enforced,
More potent still, his great example showed.
Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
Blow hollow-blustering from the south. Subdued,
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
That washed the ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackles of the mighty north;
But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave.
And hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark with trembling wretches charged,
That, tossed amid the floating fragments, moors
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
The assembled mischiefs that besiege them round?
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness,
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renewed with louder rage,
And in dire echoes bellowing round the main.
More to embroil the deep, Leviathan
And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport,
Tempest the loosened brine; while, through the gloom,
Far from the bleak inhospitable shore,

Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famished monsters, there awaiting wrecks.
Yet providence, that ever-waking eye,
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe
Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.
'Tis done!—dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man!
See here thy pictured life; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame?
Those restless cares? those busy bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights? those veering thoughts,
Lost between good and ill, that shared thy life?
All now are vanished! Virtue sole survives,—
Immortal, never-failing friend of man,
His guide to happiness on high. And see!
'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heaven and earth! awakening nature hears
The new creating word, and starts to life,
In every heightened form, from pain and death
For ever free. The great eternal scheme,
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,

To reason's eye refined clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now,
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
And Wisdom oft arraigned: see now the cause,
Why unassuming worth in secret lived,
And died, neglected: why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul:
Why the lone widow and her orphans pined
In starving solitude; while luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought
To form unreal wants: why heaven-born truth,
And moderation fair, wore the red marks
Of superstition's scourge; why licensed pain,
That cruel spoiler, that embosomed foe,
Embittered all our bliss. Ye good distressed!
Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up awhile,
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deemed evil, is no more:
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

## A HYMN.

THESE, as they change, Almighty Father, these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love.
Wide-flush the fields; the softening air is balm;
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And every sense, and every heart, is joy.
Then comes thy glory in the summer months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then thy sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year;
And oft thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks;
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales.
Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfined,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
In Winter, awful Thou! with clouds and storms
Around Thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest rolled.
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing,
Riding sublime, Thou bidst the world adore,
And humblest nature with thy northern blast.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep felt, in these appear! a simple train,
Yet so delightful mixed, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combined;
Shade, unperceived, so softening into shade;
And all so forming an harmonious whole,
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
But wandering oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not Thee, marks not the mighty hand,
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;
Works in the secret deep; shoots, steaming, thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life.

Nature, attend! join every living soul,
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration join; and, ardent, raise
One general song! To Him, ye vocal gales,
Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes:
Oh! talk of Him in solitary glooms,
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,
Who shake the astonished world, lift high to Heaven
The impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound;
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale; and thou, majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,

Sound His stupendous praise, whose greater voice
Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.
Soft-roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds to Him, whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.
Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to Him;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart,
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in Heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike,
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre.
Great source of day! best image here below
Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On nature write with every beam His praise.
The thunder rolls: be hushed the prostrate world;
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills; ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound; the broad responsive low,
Ye valleys, raise; for the Great Shepherd reigns;
And His unsuffering kingdom yet will come.
Ye woodlands all, awake: a boundless song
Burst from the groves; and when the restless day,
Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds! sweet Philomela, charm
The listening shades, and teach the night His praise.
Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles,
At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn; in swarming cities vast,
Assembled men, to the deep organ join
The long-resounding voice, oft breaking clear,
At solemn pauses, through the swelling base;

And, as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to Heaven.
Or if you rather choose the rural shade,
And find a fane in every sacred grove;
There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
Still sing the God of Seasons, as they roll.
For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the blossom blows, the summer ray
Russets the plain, inspiring Autumn gleams,
Or Winter rises in the blackening east,
Be my tongue mute, may fancy paint no more,
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!
Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song—where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles—'tis nought to me;
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste as in the city full;
And where He vital spreads there must be joy.
When even at last the solemn hour shall come,
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey; there, with new powers,
Will rising wonders sing: I cannot go
Where Universal Love not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their sons;
From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression.————But I lose
Myself in Him, in Light ineffable!
Come then, expressive silence, muse His praise.

THE

# CASTLE

OF

# INDOLENCE:

AN

# ALLEGORICAL POEM

Written in

IMITATION *of* SPENSER

BY

JAMES THOMSON.

LONDON: Printed for A. MILLAR, over againſt *Catherine-ſtreet* in the *Strand*, MDCCXLVIII.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS poem being writ in the manner of Spenser, the obsolete words, and a simplicity of diction in some of the lines, which borders on the ludicrous, were necessary to make the imitation more perfect. And the style of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote, are, as it were, appropriated by custom to all allegorical Poems writ in our language; just as in French, the style of Marot, who lived under Francis the First, has been used in tales, and familiar epistles, by the politest writers of the age of Louis the Fourteenth.

# THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

## CANTO I.

The Castle hight of Indolence,
And its false luxury;
Where for a little time, alas!
We lived right jollily.

I.

O MORTAL man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date:
And, certes, there is for it reason great; [wail,
For, though sometimes it makes thee weep and
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come a heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompassed round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is no where found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;
And there a season atween June and May,
Half prankt with spring, with summer half imbrowned,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, ne cared even for play.

III.

Was nought around but images of rest:
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest
From poppies breathed; and beds of pleasant green
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Mean-time, unnumbered glittering streamlets played,
And hurled every where their waters sheen;
That, as they bickered through the sunny glade
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

IV.

Joined to the prattle of the purling rills
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud bleating from the distant hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale:
And, now and then, sweet Philomel would wail
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep;
Yet all these sounds yblent, inclined all to sleep.

V.

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood;
Where nought but shadowy forms was seen to move,
As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood:
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, ay waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to flow.

VI.

A pleasing land of drowsy-hed it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer-sky:
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures always hovered nigh;
But whate'er smacked of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

VII.

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where INDOLENCE (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle, mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checkered day and night.
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed; and, to his lute, of cruel fate
And labour harsh complained, lamenting man's estate.

VIII.

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by:

For, as they chaunced to breathe on neighbouring hill,
The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
And drew them ever and anon more nigh;
Tillclustering round the enchanter false they hung,
Ymolten with his syren melody;
While o'er the enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
And to the trembling chords these tempting verses sung:

IX.

'Behold! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
See all but man with unearned pleasure gay:
See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May.
What youthful bride can equal her array?
Who can with her for easy pleasure vie?
From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

X.

'Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
Ten thousand throats! that, from the flowering thorn,
Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love;
Such grateful, kindly raptures them emove:
They neither plough, nor sow; ne, fit for flail,
E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove:
Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale;—
Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

XI.

'Outcast of nature, man! the wretched thrall
Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,

Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
And of the vices, an inhuman train,
That all proceed from savage thirst of gain:
For when hard-hearted interest first began
To poison earth, Astræa left the plain;
Guile, violence, and murder seized on man,
And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

XII.

'Come, ye, who still the cumbrous load of life
Push hard up hill; but, as the farthest steep
You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
Down thunders back the stone with mighty sweep,
And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
Forever vain; come, and withouten fee,
I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
Your cares, your toils; will steep you in a sea
Of full delight: Oh! come, ye weary wights, to me.

XIII.

'With me, you need not rise at early dawn
To pass the joyless day in various stounds;
Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds;
Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay;
Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds;
Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
In venal senate thieve, or rob on broad highway.

XIV.

'No cocks, with me, to rustic labour call,
From village on to village sounding clear;
To tardy swain no shrill-voiced matrons squall;
No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear;
No hammers thump; no horrid blacksmith sear,

Ne noisy tradesman your sweet slumbers start,
With sounds that are a misery to hear:
But all is calm, as would delight the heart
Of Sybarite of old, all nature, and all art.

XV.

'Here nought but candour reigns, indulgent ease
Good-natured lounging, sauntering up and down:
They who are pleased themselves must always please;
On others' ways they never squint a frown,
Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town.
Thus, from the source of tender Indolence,
With milky blood the heart is overflown,
Is soothed and sweetened by the social sense;
For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banished hence.

XVI.

'What, what is virtue, but repose of mind?
A pure ethereal calm that knows no storm;
Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
Above those passions that this world deform,
And torture man, a proud malignant worm!
But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
A quicker sense of joy; as breezes stray
Across the enlivened skies, and make them still more gay.

XVII.

'The best of men have ever loved repose:
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray;
Where the soul sours, and gradual rancour grows,
Imbittered more from peevish day to day.
Even those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,

The most renowned of worthy wights of yore,
From a base world at last have stolen away:
So Scipio,[1] to the soft Cumæan shore
Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

XVIII.

'But if a little exercise you choose,
Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here:
Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,
Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year;
Or softly stealing, with your watery gear,
Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
You may delude: the whilst, amused, you hear
Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's sigh,
Attuned to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX.

'O grievous folly! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won
With ruthless toil and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you, gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun:
But sure it is of vanities most vain,
To toil for what you here, untoiling, may obtain.'

XX.

He ceased. But still their trembling ears retained
The deep vibrations of his witching song;
That, by a kind of magic power, constrained
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
Heaps poured on heaps, and yet they slipt along
In silent ease; as when beneath the beam
Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,

Or by some flood all silvered with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream.

XXI.

By the smooth demon so it ordered was,
And here his baneful bounty first began:
Though some there were who would not further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han.
The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man;
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye.
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can;
For do their very best they cannot fly,
But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
With sudden spring he leaped upon them straight;
And, soon as touched by his unhallowed paw,
They found themselves within the cursed gate;
Full hard to be repassed, like that of fate.
Not stronger were of old the giant crew,
Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state;
Though feeble wretch he seemed, of sallow hue:
Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue.

XXIII.

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace;
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanished force remains no trace:
So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms

XXIV.

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
A comely, full-spread porter, swoln with sleep:
His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed repose;
And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep;
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran, [peep;
Through which his half-waked soul would faintly
Then, taking his black staff, he called his man,
And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

XXV.

The lad leaped lightly at his master's call:
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play, who minded nought at all;
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
But ill becoming his grave personage,
And which his portly paunch would not permit;
So this same limber page to all performed it.

XXVI.

Meantime, the master-porter wide displayed
Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns,
Wherewith he those who entered in arrayed,
Loose as the breeze that plays along the downs,
And waves the summer woods when evening frowns.
O fair undress, best dress! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns, [fain,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right
Sir porter sat him down, and turned to sleep again.

XXVII.

Thus easy-robed, they to the fountain sped
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew;
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted,
It was a fountain of nepenthe rare; [drew;
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care;
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams more fair.

XXVIII.

This rite performed, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten tromp, was proclamation made:
'Ye sons of Indolence, do what you will,
And wander where you list, through hall or glade;
Be no man's pleasure for another stayed;
Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
And cursed be he who minds his neighbour's trade.
Here dwells kind ease and unreproving joy:
He little merits bliss who others can annoy.'

XXIX.

Straight of these endless numbers, swarming round
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray, [round
Not one eftsoons in view was to be found;
But every man strolled off his own glad way.
Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,
With all the lodges that thereto pertained,
No living creature could be seen to stray;
While solitude and perfect silence reigned;
So that to think you dreamt, you almost was constrained.

XXX.

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid-Isles,[2]
Placed far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
Or that aërial beings sometimes deign
To stand, embodied, to our senses plain),
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro;
Then, all at once, in air dissolves the wondrous show.

XXXI.

Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound!
Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
And all the widely silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string?
I, who have spent my nights and nightly days,
In this soul-deadening place loose-loitering:
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

XXXII.

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp of Jove, touched by celestial fire;
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down through every worthless age.

XXXIII.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
No cursed knocker plied by villain's hand,

Self-opened into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

XXXIV.

And everywhere huge covered tables stood,
With wines high-flavoured and rich viands crowned;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round:
Some hand unseen these silently displayed,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obeyed,
Fair-ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses played.

XXXV.

Here freedom reigned without the least alloy;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenomed tongue our pleasures pall.
For why? there was but one great rule for all;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the muses might inspire.

XXXVI.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle tale;
Such as of old the rural poets sung,

Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale:
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Poured forth at large the sweetly tortured heart;
Or, looking tender passion, swelled the gale,
And taught charmed echo to resound their smart;
While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and peace impart.

XXXVII.

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age;
What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
Toil was not then: of nothing took they heed,
But with wild beasts the silvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
Blessed sons of nature they! true golden age indeed!

XXXVIII.

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landscapes rise,
Or Autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls:
Now the black tempest strikes the astonished eyes;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies;
Whate'er Lorraine light-touched with softening hue,
Or savage Rosa dashed, or learned Poussin drew.

XXXIX.

Each sound too here to languishment inclined
Lulled the weak bosom, and induced ease:
Aërial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees,

Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares,
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lulled the pensive, melancholy mind;
Full easily obtained. Behoves no more,
But sidelong, to the gently waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight:
Whence, with just cause, the harp of Æolus it hight.[3]

XLI.

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul:
Now rising love they fanned; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, thro' the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands a hymn impart:
Wild warbling nature all; above the reach of art!

XLII.

Such the gay splendour, the luxurious state,
Of Caliphs old, who on the Tigris' shore,
In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store;
And verse, love, music, still the garland wore:
When sleep was coy, the bard,[4] in waiting there,
Cheered the lone midnight with the muse's lore;

Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
Soft tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
And sobbing breezes sighed, and oft began
(So worked the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
As heaven and earth they would together mell:
At doors and windows, threatening, seemed to call
The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
Yet the least entrance found they none at all;
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

XLIV.

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace;
O'er which were shadowy cast elysian gleams,
That played, in waving lights, from place to place,
And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.
Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space;
Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV.

No, fair illusions! artful phantoms, no!
My muse will not attempt your fairy land:
She has no colours that like you can glow:
To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,
Who thus in dreams voluptuous, soft, and bland,
Poured all the Arabian heaven upon our nights,
And blessed them oft besides with more refined delights.

XLVI.

They were, in sooth, a most enchanting train,
Even feigning virtue; skilful to unite
With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
But for those fiends, whom blood and broils delight;
Who hurl the wretch as if to hell outright,
Down, down black gulfs, where sullen waters sleep,
Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep; [keep.
They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence to

XLVII.

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
From these foul demons shield the midnight
Angels of fancy and of love, be near, [gloom:
And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom:
Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
And let them virtue with a look impart:
But chief, awhile, oh! lend us from the tomb
Those long lost friends for whom in love we smart,
And fill with pious awe and joy-mixed woe the heart.

XLVIII.

Or are you sportive—Bid the morn of youth
Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
Of innocence, simplicity, and truth;
To cares estranged, and manhood's thorny ways:
What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied;
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze
Of the wild brooks!—but, fondly wandering wide,
My muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX.

One great amusement of our household was
In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,

Still as you turned it, all things that do pass
Upon this ant-hill earth; where constantly
Of idly busy men the restless fry
Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
Or which, obtained, the caitiffs dare not taste:
When nothing is enjoyed, can there be greater
waste?

L.

'Of vanity the mirror,' this was called:
Here, you a muckworm of the town might see
At his dull desk, amid his ledgers stalled,
Eat up with carking care and penury;
Most like to carcase parched on gallow-tree.
'A penny saved is a penny got.'
Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
Till it has quenched his fire, and banished his pot.

LI.

Straight from the filth of this low grub, behold!
Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
All glossy gay, enamelled all with gold,
The silly tenant of the summer air;
In folly lost, of nothing takes he care;
Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
And thieving tradesmen him among them share;
His father's ghost from limbo lake, the while,
Sees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

LII.

This globe pourtrayed the race of learned men,
Still at their books, and turning o'er the page,
Backwards and forwards. Oft they snatch the pen,
As if inspired, and in a Thespian rage;

Then write, and blot, as would your ruth engage:
Why, authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Praised to be when you can hear no more,
And much enriched with fame, when useless worldly store.

LIII.

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and cars, and coaches roaring all:
Wide-poured abroad behold the prowling crew:
See how they dash along from wall to wall!
At every door, hark how they thundering call!
Good lord! what can this giddy rout excite?
Why? On each other with fell tooth to fall;
A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace, to blight,
And make new tiresome parties for the coming night?

LIV.

The puzzling sons of party next appeared,
In dark cabals and nightly juntos met; [reared
And now they whispered close, now shrugging
The important shoulder; then, as if to get
New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
No sooner Lucifer[5] recalls affairs,
Than forth they various rush in mighty fret;
When lo! pushed up to power, and crowned their cares,
In comes another set, and kicketh them down stairs.

LV.

But what most showed the vanity of life,
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife:
Most christian kings, inflamed by black desire,

With honourable ruffians in their hire,
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
They sit them down just where they were before.
Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force restore.

LVI.

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
An useless were, and eke an endless task;
From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
To gipsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
Yea many a man, perdie, I could unmask,
Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
With tape-tied trash and suits of fools that ask
For place or pension, laid in decent row;
But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe.

LVII.

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
There was a man of special grave remark;[6]
A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
Pensive, not sad; in thought involved, not dark;
As soot this man could sing as morning lark,
And teach the noblest morals of the heart:
But these his talents were yburied stark;
Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
Which or boon nature gave, or nature painting art.

LVIII.

To noontide shades incontinent he ran,
Where purls the brook with sleep-inviting sound;
Or, when Dan Sol to slope his wheels began,
Amid the broom he basked him on the ground,
Where the wild thyme and camomile are found:
There would he linger, till the latest ray

Of light sat trembling on the welkin's bound;
Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray,
Sauntering and slow. So had he passed many a day.

LIX.

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they past:
For oft the heavenly fire, that lay concealed
Beneath the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
And all its native light anew revealed:
Oft as he traversed the cerulean field,
And marked the clouds that drove before the wind,
Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
Ten thousand great ideas filled his mind;
But with the clouds they fled, and left no tract behind.

LX.

With him was sometimes joined, in silent walk,
(Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
One shyer still,[7] who quite detested talk:
Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
To groves of pine, and broad o'ershadowing oak;
There, inly thrilled, he wandered all alone,
And on himself his pensive fury wroke,
Ne ever uttered word, save when first shone
The glittering star of eve—'Thank heaven! the day is done.'

LXI.

Here lurked a wretch, who had not crept abroad
For forty years, ne face of mortal seen;[8]
In chamber brooding like a loathly toad:
And sure his linen was not very clean.
Through secret loophole, that had practised been
Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took;
Unkempt, and rough, of squalid face and mien,

Our castle's shame! whence, from his filthy nook,
We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII.

One day there chanced into these halls to rove
A joyous youth,[9] who took you at first sight;
Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
Before the sprightly tempest tossing light:
Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
Of social glee, and wit humane though keen,
Turning the night to day and day to night:
For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
If in this nook of quiet bells had ever been.

LXIII.

But not even pleasure to excess is good:
What most elates, then sinks the soul as low:
When springtide joy pours in with copious flood,
The higher still the exulting billows flow,
The farther back again they flagging go,
And leave us groveling on the dreary shore:
Taught by this son of joy, we found it so;
Who, whilst he staid, he kept in gay uproar
Our maddened castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

LXIV.

As when in prime of June a burnished fly,
Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
Cheered by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
Soothing at first the gay reposing throng:
And oft he sips their bowl; or nearly drowned,
He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,
And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound;
Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

LXV.

Another guest[10] there was, of sense refined,
Who felt each worth, for every worth he had;
Serene yet warm, humane yet firm his mind,
As little touched as any man's with bad:
Him through their inmost walks the Muses lad,
To him the sacred love of nature lent,
And sometimes would he make our valley glad;
Whenas we found he would not here be pent,
To him the better sort this friendly message sent:

LXVI.

'Come, dwell with us! true son of virtue, come!
But if, alas! we cannot thee persuade
To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade;
Yet when at last thy toils but ill apaid
Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
There to indulge the muse, and nature mark:
We then a lodge for thee will rear in Hagley Park.'

LXVII.

Here whilom ligged the Esopus of the age;[11]
But, called by fame, in soul ypricked deep,
A noble pride restored him to the stage,
And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap:
With double force the enlivened scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum: now the heart he shakes,
And now with well urged sense the enlightened judgment takes.

LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems;
Who,[12] void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Poured forth his unpremeditated strain:
The world forsaking with a calm disdain,
Here laughed he careless in his easy seat;
Here quaffed, encircled with the joyous train;
Oft-moralizing sage! his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

LXIX.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
A little, round, fat, oily man of God,[13]
Was one I chiefly marked among the fry:
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
If a tight damsel chanced to trippen by;
Which when observed, he shrunk into his mew,
And straight would recollect his piety anew.

LXX.

Nor be forgot a tribe, who minded nought
(Old inmates of the place) but state-affairs:
They looked, perdie, as if they deeply thought;
And on their brow sat every nation's cares;
The world by them is parcelled out in shares,
When in the Hall of Smoke they congress hold,
And the sage berry, sun-burnt Mocha bears,
Has cleared their inward eye: then, smoke-enrolled,
Their oracles break forth, mysterious as of old.

LXXI.

Here languid Beauty kept her pale-faced court:
Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
From every quarter hither made resort;
Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
They lay, poured out in ease and luxury.
Or should they a vain shew of work assume,
Alas! and well-a-day! what can it be?
To knot, to twist, to 'range the vernal bloom;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

LXXII.

Their only labour was to kill the time;
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.
They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme;
Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow:
This soon too rude an exercise they find;
Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,
And court the vapoury god, soft breathing in the wind.

LXXIII.[14]

Now must I mark the villany we found,
But ah! too late, as shall eftsoons be shown.
A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground;
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseased, and loathsome, privily were thrown:
Far from the light of heaven, they languished there,
Unpitied uttering many a bitter groan;
For of these wretches taken was no care:
Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses were.

LXXIV.

Alas! the change! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where sickness tossed alway.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep oppressed,
Stretched on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day;
To stir him from his traunce it was not eath,
And his half-opened eyne he shut straightway;
He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the breath.

LXXV.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy:
Unwieldy man; with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And here a moping mystery did sit,
Mother of spleen, in robes of various dye,
Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit;
And some her frantic deemed, and some her deemed a wit.

LXXVI.

A lady proud she was, of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low:
She felt, or fancied in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leaches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro:
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Then sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not why.

LXXVII.

Fast by her side a listless maiden pined,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burnings;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seemed to hate mankind,
Yet loved in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings;
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing cocks,
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings;
Whilst Apoplexy crammed Intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.[15]

## CANTO II.

The Knight of Arts and Industry,
And his achievements fair;
That, by this Castle's overthrow,
Secured, and crowned were.

I.

ESCAPED the castle of the sire of sin,
Ah! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find?
For all around, without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness savouring and a tender mind,
E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
Of doleful note, alas! remains behind:
I now must sing of pleasure turned to pain,
And of the false enchanter INDOLENCE complain.

II.

Is there no patron to protect the Muse,
And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil?
To every labour its reward accrues,
And they are sure of bread who swink and moil;
But a fell tribe the Aonian hive despoil,
As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee:
Thus while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
Ne for the Muses other meed decree,
They praised are alone, and starve right merrily.

III.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny:
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve:
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave:
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV.

Come then, my Muse, and raise a bolder song;
Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
Dragging the lazy languid line along,
Fond to begin, but still to finish loath,
Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth:
Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
Who with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
To sweep away this human lumber came,
Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

V.

In fairy land there lived a knight of old,
Of feature stern, Selvaggio well ycleped,
A rough unpolished man, robust and bold,
But wondrous poor: he neither sowed nor reaped,
Ne stores in summer for cold winter heaped;
In hunting all his days away he wore;
Now scorched by June, now in November steeped,
Now pinched by biting January sore,
He still in woods pursued the libbard and the boar.

VI.

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
Pricked through the forest to dislodge his prey,

Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
With wood wild fringed, he marked a taper's ray,
That from the beating rain, and wintry fray,
Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy;
There, up to earn the needments of the day,
He found dame Poverty, nor fair nor coy:
Her he compressed, and filled her with a lusty boy.

VII.

Amid the greenwood shade this boy was bred,
And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
Of active mind and vigorous lustyhed,
The Knight of Arts and Industry by name:
Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame;
He knew no beverage but the flowing stream;
His tasteful well earned food the sylvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the woodlands teem:
The same to him glad summer, or the winter breme.

VIII.

So passed his youthly morning, void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run:
For him no tender parents troubled were,
He of the forest seemed to be the son,
And, certes, had been utterly undone;
But that Minerva pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne,
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook;
Ne did the sacred Nine disdain a gentle look.

IX.

Of fertile genius him they nurtured well,
In every science, and in every art,
By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
Disclosing all the powers of head and heart:

Ne were the goodly exercises spared,
That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert.
And mix elastic force with firmness hard:
Was never knight on ground mote be with him
compared.

X.

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,
And drew the roseate breath of orient day;
Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
Yclad in steel, and bright with burnished mail,
He strained the bow, or tossed the sounding spear,
Or darting on the goal, outstripped the gale,
Or wheeled the chariot in its mid career, [peer.
Or, strenuous, wrestled hard with many a tough com-

XI.

At other times he pried through nature's store,
Whate'er she in the ethereal round contains,
Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor;
The vegetable and the mineral reigns;
Or else he scanned the globe, those small domains,
Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains;
But more he searched the mind, and roused from
sleep
Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII.

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits
Of heavenly truth, and practise what she taught:
Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits!
Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught.
Forth calling all with which boon earth is fraught;
Sometimes he plied the strong mechanic tool,

Or reared the fabric from the finest draught;
And oft he put himself to Neptune's school,
Fighting with winds and waves on the vexed ocean pool.

XIII.

To solace then these rougher toils, he tried
To touch the kindling canvass into life;
With nature his creating pencil vied,
With nature joyous at the mimic strife:
Or, to such shapes as graced Pygmalion's wife
He hewed the marble; or, with varied fire,
He roused the trumpet and the martial fife,
Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire,
Or verses framed that well might wake Apollo's lyre.

XIV.

Accomplished thus, he from the woods issued,
Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprise;
The work, which long he in his breast had brewed,
Now to perform he ardent did devise;
To wit, a barbarous world to civilize.
Earth was till then a boundless forest wild;
Nought to be seen but savage wood and skies;
No cities nourished arts, no culture smiled,
No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV.

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man;
On his own wretched kind he, ruthless, preyed:
The strongest still the weakest over-ran;
In every country mighty robbers swayed,
And guile and ruffian force were all their trade.
Life was not life, but rapine, want, and woe;
Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
To swear he would the rascal rout-o'erthrow;
For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so!

XVI.

It would exceed the purport of my song
To say how this best sun, from orient climes,
Came beaming life and beauty all along,
Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
Still as he passed, the nations he sublimes,
And calls forth arts and virtue with his ray:
Then Egypt, Greece, and Rome their golden times,
Successive, had; but now in ruins grey
They lie, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII.

To crown his toils, Sir Industry then spread
The swelling sail, and made for Britain's coast.
A silvan life till then the natives led,
In the brown shades and green-wood forest lost,
All careless, rambling where it liked them most:
Their wealth the wild deer bouncing through the glade;
They lodged at large, and lived at nature's cost;
Save spear and bow, withouten other aid;
Yet not the Roman steel their naked breast dismayed.

XVIII.

He liked the soil, he liked the clement skies,
He liked the verdant hills and flowery plains:
'Be this my great, my chosen isle, (he cries)
This, whilst my labours liberty sustains,
This queen of ocean all assault disdains.'
Nor liked he less the genius of the land,
To freedom apt and persevering pains,
Mild to obey, and generous to command,
Tempered by forming Heaven with kindest firmest hand.

XIX.

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
Whatever arts and industry can frame:

Whatever finished agriculture knows,
Fair queen of arts! from heaven itself who came,
When Eden flourished in unspotted fame;
And still with her sweet innocence we find,
And tender peace, and joys without a name,
That, while they rapture, tranquillize the mind:
Nature and art at once; delight and use combined.

XX.

Then towns he quickened by mechanic arts,
And bade the fervent city glow with toil;
Bade social commerce raise renowned marts,
Join land to land, and marry soil to soil;
Unite the poles, and without bloody spoil
Bring home of either Ind the gorgeous stores;
Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores, [roars.
While o'er the encircling deep Britannia's thunder

XXI.

The drooping muses then he westward called,
From the famed city by Propontis sea,[1]
What time the Turk the enfeebled Grecian thralled;
Thence from their cloistered walks he set them free,
And brought them to another Castalie,
Where Isis many a famous nursling breeds;
Or where old Cam soft-paces o'er the lea
In pensive mood, and tunes his doric reeds,
The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd feeds.

XXII.

Yet the fine arts were what he finished least.
For why? They are the quintessence of all,
The growth of labouring time, and slow increased;
Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall

That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
Up to the sunshine of uncumbered ease, [thrall,
Where no rude care the mounting thought may
And where they nothing have to do but please:
Ah! gracious God! thou know'st they ask no other fees.

XXIII.

But now, alas! we live too late in time:
Our patrons now even grudge that little claim,
Except to such as sleek the soothing rhyme;
And yet, forsooth, they wear Mæcenas' name,
Poor sons of puft-up vanity, not fame.
Unbroken spirits, cheer! still, still remains
The eternal patron, Liberty; whose flame,
While she protects, inspires the noblest strains:
The best and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

XXIV.

When as the knight had framed, in Britain-land,
A matchless form of glorious government,
In which the sovereign laws alone command,
Laws stablished by the public free consent,
Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent;
When this great plan, with each dependent art,
Was settled firm, and to his heart's content,
Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet through the heart.

XXV.

For this he chose a farm in Deva's vale,
Where his long alleys peeped upon the main:
In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
Commixed the chief, the patriot, and the swain.
The happy monarch of his silvan train,

Here, sided by the guardians of the fold, [main:
He walked his rounds, and cheered his blest do-
His days, the days of unstained nature, rolled
Replete with peace and joy, like patriarch's of old.

XXVI.

Witness, ye lowing herds, who lent him milk;
Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far
Exceed soft India's cotton, or her silk;
Witness, with Autumn charged, the nodding car,
That homeward came beneath sweet evening's star,
Or of september-moons the radiance mild.
Oh, hide thy head, abominable war!
Of crimes and ruffian idleness the child! [vild!
From Heaven this life ysprung, from hell thy glories

XXVII.

Nor from his deep retirement banished was
The amusing care of rural industry.
Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landscapes strike the eye,
And all the enlivened country beautify:
Gay plains extend where marshes slept before;
O'er recent meads the exulting streamlets fly;
Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres'
store, [shore.
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the

XXVIII.

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
He polished nature with a finer hand:
Yet on her beauties durst not art encroach;
'Tis art's alone these beauties to expand.
In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
Pan, Pales, Flora, and Pomona played: [fand
Even here, sometimes, the rude wild common

A happy place; where, free and unafraid,
Amid the flowering brakes each coyer creature strayed.

XXIX.

But in prime vigour what can last for aye?
That soul-enfeebling wizard, Indolence,
I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay:
Spread far and wide was his cursed influence;
Of public virtue much he dulled the sense,
Even much of private; eat our spirit out,
And fed our rank luxurious vices: whence
The land was overlaid with many a lout; [stout.
Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and

XXX.

A rage of pleasure maddened every breast,
Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran:
To his licentious wish each must be blessed,
With joy be fevered; snatch it as he can.
Thus vice the standard reared; her arrier-ban
Corruption called, and loud she gave the word.
'Mind, mind yourselves! why should the vulgar man,
The laquey, be more virtuous than his lord?
Enjoy this span of life! 'tis all the gods afford.'

XXXI.

The tidings reached to where, in quiet hall,
The good old knight enjoyed well earned repose:
'Come, come, Sir Knight! thy children on thee call;
Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close!
The demon Indolence thy toils o'erthrows.'
On this the noble colour stained his cheeks,
Indignant, glowing through the whitening snows

Of venerable eld; his eye full-speaks [breaks.
His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he

XXXII.

'I will, (he cried) so help me, God! destroy
That villain Archimage.'—His page then straight
He to him called; a fiery-footed boy,
Benempt Dispatch:—'My steed be at the gate;
My bard attend; quick, bring the net of fate.'
This net was twisted by the sisters three;
Which, when once cast o'er hardened wretch, too
Repentance comes: replevy cannot be [late
From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

XXXIII.

He came, the bard, a little Druid wight,
Of withered aspect; but his eye was keen,
With sweetness mixed. In russet brown bedight,
As is his sister of the copses green,
He crept along, unpromising of mien.
Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
Bright as the children of yon azure sheen!
True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
Dwells in the mine: all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV.

'Come (quoth the Knight), a voice has reached
The demon Indolence threats overthrow [mine ear;
To all that to mankind is good and dear:
Come, Philomelus; let us instant go,
O'erturn his bowers, and lay his castle low.
Those men, those wretched men, who will be
Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of woe: [slaves,
But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
Shall raise.' Thrice happy he who without rigour
saves!

XXXV.

Issuing forth, the Knight bestrode his steed,
Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star
Shone blazing bright: sprung from the generous breed
That whirl of active day the rapid car,
He pranced along, disdaining gate or bar.
Meantime, the bard on milk-white palfrey rode;
An honest sober beast, that did not mar
His meditations, but full softly trode:
And much they moralized as thus yfere they yode.

XXXVI.

They talked of virtue, and of human bliss.
What else so fit for man to settle well?
And still their long researches met in this,
This truth of truths, which nothing can refel:
'From virtue's fount the purest joys outwell,
Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscious soul;
While vice pours forth the troubled streams of hell,
The which, howe'er disguised, at last with dole
Will through the tortured breast their fiery torrent roll.

XXXVII.

At length it dawned, that fatal valley gay,
O'er which high wood-crowned hills their summits rear:
On the cool height awhile our palmers stay,
And spite even of themselves their senses cheer;
Then to the wizard's wonne their steps they steer.
Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread,
With gardens round, and wandering currents clear,
And tufted groves to shade the meadow-bed,
Sweet airs and song; and without hurry all seemed glad.

XXXVIII.

'As God shall judge me, Knight, we must forgive
(The half-enraptured Philomelus cried)
The frail good man deluded here to live,
And in these groves his musing fancy hide.
Ah, nought is pure! It cannot be denied
That virtue still some tincture has of vice,
And vice of virtue. What should then betide,
But that our charity be not too nice?
Come, let us those we can to real bliss entice.'

XXXIX.

'Ay, sicker, (quoth the Knight) all flesh is frail,
To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent;
But let not brutish vice of this avail,
And think to 'scape deserved punishment.
Justice were cruel weakly to relent;
From mercy's self she got her sacred glaive:
Grace be to those who can, and will, repent;
But penance, long and dreary, to the slave,
Who must in floods of fire his gross foul spirit lave.'

XL.

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade;
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.
But when he saw, in goodly geer arrayed,
The grave majestic Knight approaching nigh,
And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
His countenance fell; yet oft his anxious eye
Marked them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth spy.

XLI.

Nathless, with feigned respect, he bade give back
The rabble rout, and welcomed them full kind;

Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
His orders to obey, and fall behind.
Then he resumed his song; and, unconfined,
Poured all his music, ran through all his strings:
With magic dust their eyne he tries to blind,
And virtue's tender airs o'er weakness flings.
What pity base his song who so divinely sings!

XLII.

Elate in thought, he counted them his own,
They listened so intent with fixed delight:
But they instead, as if transmewed to stone,
Marvelled he could with such sweet art unite
The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.
Meantime, the silly crowd the charm devour,
Wide pressing to the gate. Swift, on the Knight
He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower,
Who backening shunned his touch, for well he knew
its power.

XLIII.

As in thronged amphitheatre, of old,
The wary Retiarius[2] trapped his foe;
Even so the Knight, returning on him bold,
At once involved him in the Net of Woe,
Whereof I mention made not long ago.
Enraged at first, he scorned so weak a jail,
And leaped, and flew, and flounced to and fro;
But when he found that nothing could avail,
He sat him felly down, and gnawed his bitter nail.

XLIV.

Alarmed, the inferior demons of the place
Raised rueful shrieks and hideous yells around;
Black ruptured clouds deformed the welkin's face,
And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,

As of infernal sprights in cavern bound;
A solemn sadness every creature strook,
And lightnings flashed, and horror rocked the ground:
Huge crowds on crowds outpoured, with blem-[ished look,
As if on Time's last verge this frame of things had shook.

XLV.

Soon as the short-lived tempest was yspent,
Steamed from the jaws of vexed Avernus' hole,
And hushed the hubbub of the rabblement,
Sir Industry the first calm moment stole:
'There must, (he cried) amid so vast a shoal,
Be some who are not tainted at the heart,
Not poisoned quite by this same villain's bowl:
Come then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart;
Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit start.'

XLVI.

The bard obeyed; and taking from his side,
Where it in seemly sort depending hung,
His British harp, its speaking strings he tried,
The which with skilful touch he deftly strung,
Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung.
Then, as he felt the Muses come along,
Light o'er the chords his raptured hand he flung,
And played a prelude to his rising song:
The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousands round him throng.

XLVII.

Thus, ardent, burst his strain.—'Ye hapless race,
Dire labouring here to smother reason's ray,
That lights our Maker's image in our face,
And gives us wide o'er earth unquestioned sway;

What is the adored Supreme Perfection, say?
What, but eternal never resting soul,
Almighty power, and all-directing day;
By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll;
Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the whole.

XLVIII.

'Come, to the beaming God your hearts unfold!
Draw from its fountain life! 'Tis thence, alone,
We can excel. Up from unfeeling mould,
To seraphs burning round the Almighty's throne,
Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
Perfection forms, and with perfection bliss.
In universal nature this clear shown,
Not needeth proof: to prove it were, I wis,
To prove the beauteous world excels the brute abyss.

XLIX.

'Is not the field, with lively culture green,
A sight more joyous than the dead morass?
Do not the skies, with active ether clean,
And fanned by sprightly zephyrs, far surpass
The foul November fogs, and slumbrous mass
With which sad nature veils her drooping face?
Does not the mountain stream, as clear as glass,
Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace?
The same in all holds true, but chief in human race.

L.

'It was not by vile loitering in ease
That Greece obtained the brighter palm of art;
That soft yet ardent Athens learned to please,
To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart:
In all supreme! complete in every part!
It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart:

For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows;
Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

LI.

'Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
But in loose joy their time to wear away;
Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
Pleased on her pillow their dull heads to lay,
Rude nature's state had been our state to-day;
No cities e'er their towery fronts had raised,
No arts had made us opulent and gay;
With brother brutes the human race had grazed;
None e'er had soared to fame, none honoured been, none praised.

LII.

'Great Homer's song had never fired the breast
To thirst of glory and heroic deeds;
Sweet Maro's muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
Had silent slept amid the Mincian[3] reeds:
The wits of modern time had told their beads,
The monkish legends been their only strains;
Our Milton's Eden had lain wrapt in weeds,
Our Shakespeare strolled and laughed with Warwick swains,
Ne had my master Spenser charmed his Mulla's plains.

LIII.

'Dumb too had been the sage historic muse,
And perished all the sons of ancient fame;
Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
Had all been lost with such as have no name.
Who then had scorned his ease for others' good?
Who then had toiled rapacious men to tame?

Who in the public breach devoted stood,
And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood?

LIV.

'But should to fame your hearts impervious be,
If right I read, you pleasure all require:
Then hear how best may be obtained this fee,
How best enjoyed this nature's wide desire.
Toil and be glad! let Industry inspire
Into your quickened limbs her buoyant breath!
Who does not act is dead; absorpt entire
In miry sloth, no pride, no joy he hath:
O leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death!

LV.

'Better the toiling swain, oh, happier far!
Perhaps the happiest of the sons of men!
Who vigorous plies the plough, the team, or car;
Who houghs the field, or ditches in the glen,
Delves in his garden, or secures his pen:
The tooth of avarice poisons not his peace;
He tosses not in sloth's abhorred den;
From vanity he has a full release;
And, rich in nature's wealth, he thinks not of increase.

LVI.

'Good Lord! how keen are his sensations all!
His bread is sweeter than the glutton's cates;
The wines of France upon the palate pall,
Compared with what his simple soul elates,
The native cup whose flavour thirst creates;
At one deep draught of sleep he takes the night;
And for that heart-felt joy which nothing mates,
Of the pure nuptial bed the chaste delight,
The losel is to him a miserable wight.

LVII.

'But what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
When sickening health and spirits go amiss?
How tasteless then whatever can be given!
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise, of health. In proof of this,
Behold the wretch who slugs his life away,
Soon swallowed in disease's sad abyss;
While he whom toil has braced, or manly play,
Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as day.

LVIII.

'Oh, who can speak the vigorous joys of health!
Unclogged the body, unobscured the mind:
The morning rises gay, with pleasing stealth,
The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
In health the wiser brutes true gladness find:
See, how the younglings frisk along the meads,
As May comes on and wakes the balmy wind;
Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds:
Yet what save high-strung health this dancing pleasaunce breeds?

LIX.

'But here, instead, is fostered every ill,
Which or distempered minds or bodies know.
Come then, my kindred spirits! do not spill
Your talents here: this place is but a show,
Whose charms delude you to the den of woe.
Come, follow me, I will direct you right,
Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents, grow,
Sincere as sweet; come, follow this good Knight,
And you will bless the day that brought him to your sight.

LX.

'Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps;
To senates some, and public sage debates,
Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight lamps,
The world is poised, and managed mighty states;
To high discovery some, that new creates
The face of earth; some to the thriving mart;
Some to the rural reign, and softer fates;
To the sweet muses some, who raise the heart:
All glory shall be yours, all nature, and all art.

LXI.

'There are, I see, who listen to my lay,
Who, wretched, sigh for virtue, but despair:
"All may be done, (methinks I hear them say)
Even death despised by generous actions fair;
All, but for those who to these bowers repair,
Their every power dissolved in luxury,
To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
And from the powerful arms of sloth get free:
'Tis rising from the dead. Alas! It cannot be!"

LXII.

'Would you then learn to dissipate the band
Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
His soul appal, and damp his rising fire?
Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.
Exert that noblest privilege, alone,
Here to mankind indulged; control desire:
Let godlike reason, from her sovereign throne,
Speak the commanding word "I will!" and it is done.

LXIII.

'Heavens! can you then thus waste, in shameful wise,

Your few important days of trial here?
Heirs of eternity! yborn to rise
Through endless states of being, still more near
To bliss approaching, and perfection clear;
Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
And roll, with vilest brutes, through mud and slime?
No! no!—Your heaven-touched hearts disdain the piteous crime!'

LXIV.

'Enough! enough!' they cried. Straight, from the crowd,
The better sort on wings of transport fly:
As when, amid the lifeless summits proud
Of Alpine cliffs, where, to the gelid sky,
Snows piled on snows in wintry torpor lie,
The rays divine of vernal Phœbus play;
The awakened heaps, in streamlets from on high,
Roused into action, lively leap away,
Glad warbling through the vales, in their new being gay.

LXV.

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
That lighted up these new created men,
Than that which wings the exulting spirit clean,
When, just delivered from this fleshly den,
It soaring seeks its native skies agen:
How light its essence! how unclogged its powers!
Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen:
Even so we glad forsook these sinful bowers;
Even such enraptured life, such energy was ours.

LXVI.

But far the greater part, with rage inflamed,
Dire muttered curses, and blasphemed high Jove:
'Ye sons of hate! (they bitterly exclaimed)
What brought you to this seat of peace and love?
While with kind nature, here amid the grove,
We passed the harmless sabbath of our time,
What to disturb it could, fell men, emove
Your barbarous hearts? Is happiness a crime?
Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon Heaven sublime.'

LXVII.

'Ye impious wretches, (quoth the Knight in wrath)
Your happiness behold!' Then straight a wand
He waved, an anti-magic power that hath,
Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
Sudden the landscape sinks on every hand;
The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found;
On baleful heaths the groves all blackened stand;
And o'er the weedy foul abhorred ground,
Snakes, adders, toads, each loathly creature crawls around.

LXVIII.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scathed,
Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung;
Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bathed,
They weltering lay; or else, infuriate flung
Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung
The funeral dirge, they down the torrent rolled:
These, by distempered blood to madness stung,
Had doomed themselves; whence oft, when night controlled
The world, returning hither their sad spirits howled.

LXIX.

Meantime a moving scene was open laid:
That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay
Depainted have, its horrors deep displayed,
And gave unnumbered wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light the unwonted smile
Poured on these living catacombs its ray,
Through the drear caverns stretching many a mile,
The sick upraised their heads, and dropped their woes awhile.

LXX.

'O Heaven! (they cried) and do we once more see
Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair?
Are we from noisome damps of pesthouse free?
And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air?
O thou! or Knight, or God? who holdest there
That fiend, oh, keep him in eternal chains!
But what for us, the children of despair,
Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains?
Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains.'

LXXI.

The gentle Knight, who saw their rueful case,
Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
'Certes (quoth he) it is not even in grace
To undo the past, and eke your broken years:
Nathless, to nobler worlds repentance rears,
With humble hope, her eye; to her is given
A power the truly contrite heart that cheers;
She quells the brand by which the rocks are riven:
She more than merely softens, she rejoices Heaven.

LXXII.

'Then patient bear the sufferings you have earned,
And by these sufferings purify the mind;
Let wisdom be by past misconduct learned:
Or pious die, with penitence resigned;
And to a life more happy and refined,
Doubt not, you shall, new creatures, yet arise.
Till then, you may expect in me to find
One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
One who will soothe your pangs, and wing you to the skies.'

LXXIII.

They silent heard, and poured their thanks in tears:
'For you (resumed the Knight with sterner tone)
Whose hard dry hearts the obdurate demon sears,
That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan;
In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan
His fatal charms, and weep your stains away;
Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
You feel a perfect change: then, who can say
What grace may yet shine forth in Heaven's eternal day?'

LXXIV.

This said, his powerful wand he waved anew:
Instant, a glorious angel-train descends,
The charities, to wit, of rosy hue:
Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
At once, delighted, to their charge they fly:
When lo! a goodly hospital ascends,
In which they bade each human aid be nigh,
That could the sick-bed smooth of that unhappy fry.

LXXV.

It was a worthy, edifying sight,
And gives to human kind peculiar grace,
To see kind hands attending day and night,
With tender ministry, from place to place.
Some prop the head; some, from the pallid face
Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds;
Some reach the healing draught: the whilst, to chase
The fear supreme, around their softened beds,
Some holy man, by prayer, all-opening Heaven dispreds.

LXXVI.

Attended by a glad acclaiming train
Of those he rescued had from gaping hell,
Then turned the Knight; and, to his hall again
Soft-pacing, sought of peace the mossy cell:
Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell,
To see the helpless wretches that remained,
There left through delves and deserts dire to yell;
Amazed, their looks with pale dismay were stained,
And, spreading wide their hands, they meek repentance feigned.

LXXVII.

But ah! their scorned day of grace was past:
For (horrible to tell!) a desert wild
Before them stretched, bare, comfortless, and vast;
With gibbets, bones, and carcases defiled.
There nor trim field, nor lively culture smiled;
Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair;
But sands abrupt on sands lay loosely piled,

Through which they floundering toiled with painful care,
Whilst Phœbus smote them sore, and fired the cloudless air.

LXXVIII.

Then, varying to a joyless land of bogs,
The saddened country a gray waste appeared,
Where nought but putrid streams and noisome fogs
For ever hung on drizzly Auster's beard;
Or else the ground, by piercing Caurus seared,
Was jagged with frost, or heaped with glazed snow;
Through these extremes a ceaseless round they steered,
By cruel fiends still hurried to and fro,
Gaunt beggary and scorn, with many hell-hounds moe.

LXXIX.

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
Tainting the gale, in which they fluttered light;
Of morbid hue his features, sunk and sad;
His hollow eyne shook forth a sickly light;
And o'er his lank jawbone, in piteous plight,
His black rough beard was matted rank and vile;
Direful to see! a heart-appalling sight!
Meantime foul scurf and blotches him defile;
And dogs, where'er he went, still barked all the while.

LXXX.

The other was a fell despightful fiend;
Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below:
By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour, keened;
Of man alike, if good or bad, the foe:
With nose upturned, he always made a show
As if he smelt some nauseous scent; his eye

Was cold and keen, like blast from boreal snow;
And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.
Such were the twain that off-drove this ungodly fry.

LXXXI.

Even so through Brentford town, a town of mud,
A herd of bristly swine is pricked along;
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troubious song;
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among:
But aye the ruthless driver goads them on,
And aye of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan,
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting fone.

# NOTES.

## CANTO I.

PUBLIUS Æmilianus Scipio, who retired from public life to Gaeta.

2. Those Islands on the western coast of Scotland, called the Hebrides.—T.

3. This is not an imagination of the Author; there being in fact such an instrument called Æolus's Harp, which, when placed against a little rushing or current of air, produces the effect here described.—T.

4. The Arabian Caliphs had poets among the officers of their Court, whose office it was to do what is here mentioned.—T.

5. The Morning Star.—T.

6. William Paterson,—who was Thomson's amanuensis and succeeded him in the office of surveyor general in the Leeward Isles.

7. Conjecture has applied this to Dr. Armstrong the Poet.—*Nicolas.*

8. Henry Welby, Esq. See Granger, iii. 132, 5th edition.

9. John Forbes, son of Duncan Forbes, of Culloden.

10. George, Lord Lyttelton.

11. Mr. Quin, the celebrated actor.

12. The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the Author.—T. They are generally ascribed to Lord Lyttelton, and were designed to portray the character of the poet.

13. The Rev. Patrick Murdoch, Thomson's friend and biographer.

14. This stanza is said by Sir H. Nicolas to have appeared in an edition of the "Castle of Indolence" published in 1746, and is supposed to describe Lady Lyttelton:—

> One nymph there was, methought, in bloom of May,
> On whom the idle fiend glanced many a look,
> In hopes to lead her down the slippery way
> To taste of pleasure's deep deceitful brook:
> No virtues yet her gentle mind forsook;
> No idle whims, no vapours filled her brain,
> But prudence for her youthful guide she took,
> And goodness, which no earthly vice could stain,
> Dwelt in her mind; she was no proud, I ween or vain.

Now the earliest edition of this poem that I can find is the 4to. edition of 1748, and this is proved to be the first by an 8vo. edition having been published during the same year with *second* edition on the title-page. This stanza is not in either of these editions, nor in Lord Lyttelton's edition of 1750, nor in Murdoch's edition of 1762. It may have been *handed about in MS.* as early as 1746, but through Lord Lyttelton's or some other influence never *published* either by the author or his friends.

15. The four concluding stanzas were written by Dr. Armstrong, and appear in his *Miscellanies*, 1770, under the title, "*An Imitation of Spenser, written at Mr. Thomson's desire to be inserted into the Castle of Indolence.*"

## CANTO II.

1. Constantinople.—T.

2. A Gladiator, who made use of a net, which he threw over his adversary.—T.

3. The river of Italy which takes its rise in the lake Di Gardi, flows through the lake which surrounds Mantua, and empties itself into the river Po.

## EXPLANATION OF THE OBSOLETE WORDS

## USED IN THE POEM.

*Apaid*, paid.
*Appal*, fright.
*Archimage*, the chief or greatest of musicians or enchanters.
*Atween*, between.
*Auster*, the south wind.
*Ay*, always.

*Bale*, sorrow, trouble, misfortune.
*Benempt*, named.
*Bickered*, moved unsteadily.
*Blazon*, painting, displaying.
*Breme*, cold, raw.

*Carking*, anxious.
*Carle*, churl.
*Carol*, to sing songs of joy.
*Catis*, dainties.
*Caurus*, the north-east wind.
*Certes*, certainly.
*Coil*, a buzzing noise.

*Dan*, for Don, Dominus.
*Delves*, for dell.
*Deftly*, skilfully.
*Depainted*, painted.
*Dole*, sadness.
*Drowsy-hed*, drowsiness.

*Eath*, easy.
*Eftsoons*, immediately, often, afterwards.
*Eke*, also.
*Emove*, for move.
*En*, was frequently added to a word by Spenser to lengthen it a syllable.
*Eyne*, eyes.

*Fand*, proved.
*Fays*, fairies.
*Felly*, fiercely.
*Fone*, foes.

*Gear* or *geer*, furniture, equipage, dress.
*Glaive*, sword.
*Glee*, joy, pleasure.

*Han*, have.
*Hight*, is named, called.

*Idless*, idleness.
*Imp*, child or offspring, (from the Saxon *impan*, to graft or plant.)

*Kest*, for cast.

*Lad*, for led.
*Lea*, a piece of land or meadow.
*Libbard*, leopard.
*Lig*, to lie.
*Limber*, qy. active.
*Lithe*, loose, lax.
*Loathly*, loathsome.

*Losel*, a loose, idle fellow.
*Louting*, bowing, bending.

*Mell*, mingle.
*Moe*, more.
*Moil*, to labour.
*Mote*, might.
*Muchel*, or *mochel*, much, great.

*Nathless*, nevertheless.
*Ne*, nor.
*Needments*, necessaries.
*Nepenthe*, a medicine which relieves pain.
*Noursling*, a nurse, or what is nursed.
*Noyance*, harm.

*Palmer*, pilgrim.
*Plain*, to mourn.
*Prankt*, coloured, adorned gaily.
*Perdie*, (for par Dieu,) an old oath.
*Priched through the forest*, rode through the forest.

*Repel*, disprove.
*Ruth*, compassion.

*Sear*, dry, burnt up.
*Sheen*, bright, shining.
*Sicker*, sure, surely.
*Smackt*, savoured.
*Soot*, sweet or sweetly.
*Sooth*, true or truth.
*Stound*, misfortune, pang.
*Sweltry*, sultry, consuming with heat.
*Swink*, to labour.

*Thrall*, slave.
*Transmewed*, transformed.

*Unkempt*, (Lat. incomptus,) unadorned.

*Vild*, vile.

*Ween*, to think, be of opinion
*Weet*, *wot*, to know, to weet, to wit.
*Whilom*, erewhile, formerly.
*Wight*, man.
*Wis* for *Wist*, to know, think, understand.
*Wonne*, (a noun,) dwelling.
*Wroke*, wreaked.

N.B. The letter *y* is frequently placed in the beginning of a word by Spenser to lengthen it a syllable.
*Yblent* or *blent*, blended, mingled thereby.
*Yborn*, born.
*Yclad*, clad.
*Ycleped*, called, named.
*Yfere*, together.
*Yhung*, hung.
*Ymolten*, melted.
*Yode*, (preter tense of yede,) went.

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